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COMMONWEAL

A Review of Religion, Politics, and Culture

April 20, 2001

What Would Medieval Theologians Think of the Mandate?

Jean Porter

The Roots of Israeli-Palestinian Violence

David Burrell

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To the Editors

A merry man

Your editorial "All Dressed Up" (March 23), about the recent consistory in Rome, characterizes New York's Cardinal Edward M. Egan quite inaccurately as having "yet to convey much warmth or pastoral vision, let alone Christian mirth."

Last January our relatively new archbishop began a series of meetings in each vicariate with the priests, deacons, religious, and parishioners. It is quite obvious that he enjoys this pastoral interaction with people, and they with him.

He has begun a monthly schedule of Masses: two Sundays in the cathedral and two Sundays out in a parish, where he offers two Masses, meets with the parishioners at a reception, and then has lunch with the clergy.

Last December, he gave a day of recollection at Dunwoodie Seminary for the priests of the archdiocese. He prefaced one of his talks with two stories. One, he said, was true. It was from the Gospel. The other, he said with a shrug, may or may not be. But, he added, rattling off a few words in Italian and then translating them, "If it's not true, isn't it a shame." Each story made its point, the second with a touch of Italian humor.

At the Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick dinner, Egan prefaced his invocation by referring to his fellow cardinal, Jesuit Avery Dulles. In Rome, he observed, he had told the Jesuit superior that he himself had been exposed to Jesuit education and felt that he was three-quarters Jesuit. The superior shrugged and said, "It's the fourth quarter that really counts." The crowd enjoyed the humor and after the main course, Egan left the dais and worked the tables with obvious pleasure.

I am sure that the editorial writer has not had the opportunity to experience such examples of the pastoral warmth and humor of New York's new cardinal archbishop.

(MSGR.) HARRY J. BYRNE
New York, N.Y.

Priestly crisis

Your editorial "All Dressed Up" well describes the sartorial elegance and the Vatican's provident largesse in the February consistory of cardinals. Delicately, too, it limns the denial of "a position of authority in the official structure of the church" to women.

Unmentioned, though, in the bountifulness of the occasion is the nagging and ominous worldwide decline in the number of Catholic priests. The pope's refusal even to discuss the ordination of women, as well as the current limitation of married priests in the Latin rite to the exceptional trickle from a few other traditions of married clergy who wish to convert, seem to presage, in the midst of the pageantry, the worsening of a critical situation.

E. LEO MCMANUS
Venice, Fla.

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Letters may be edited for the purposes of clarity and space, and have a better chance of being published if not more than 250 words in length.

'Image' maker

Congratulations on the March 9 issue of *Commonweal*. I am particularly impressed with Greg Wolfe's "I Was a Teenage Conservative." It is a positive antidote to some of the problems many of us face in trying to live in this society. *Image* is an amazing magazine.

L.D. COLLINS
Newton, Pa.

Information on Image *can be found at www.imagejournal.org.*

Too hot a house

It was a venial jolly to read in the morning paper that a member of Opus Dei was caught as a spy in employ of the Russians. It shook up the American superior of Opus Dei who quickly announced that Robert Phillip Hanssen was a stingy financial contributor to "the Work." His discomfort tickled liberal Catholics who are always being criticized for our lack of moral rectitude.

However, I was made uncomfortable by Paul Baumann's March 23 "Agent Hanssen," expanding on the little we know about Hanssen's motives, and the way Baumann relates Hanssen's religious and social views to spying. The author creates a lengthy analysis of his own and is long into his article before he admits, "But that's all speculation..."

Baumann seems to be using the incident to suggest that Opus Dei is a baroque hothouse that attracts unhappy American Catholics and turns them into countercultural fascists and spies. If that seems to be a stretch of Baumann's intent, I hope he will realize how his article inspired it.

(REV.) BILL FLAHERTY
Winnetka, Ill.

The author replies:

I think Opus Dei is a baroque hothouse that is likely to attract people with a very low opinion of liberal democracy. I find that worrisome. However, I was careful not to suggest

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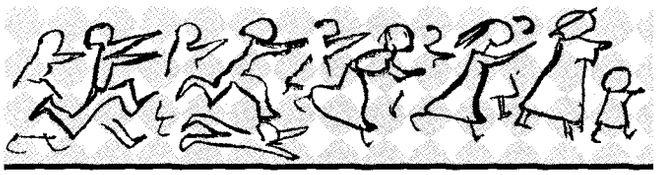

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that there existed any cause and effect relationship between Hanssen's membership in the organization and his alleged crimes. PAUL BAUMANN

An inspiration

As general superior of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, Convent Station, New Jersey, I would like to recognize an amazing woman who has served in our community for seventy-six years. I am referring to Sister Mary Carita Pendergast whose "At Bayonet Point," February 23, spotlights her ministry in China. Sister Carita has been a lifelong advocate of our "vision statement" and has been an inspiration to those who were fortunate enough to have crossed her path. On behalf of the general council and our community, the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, I would like to express our gratitude to Sister Mary Carita for her ongoing courage, compassion, and dedication. Kudos to *Commonweal* for publishing her article! Your publication continues to be a bright spot on the church horizon.

BARBARA CONROY, S.C.
Convent Station, N.J.

Correction

Gordon Marino's "Avoiding Moral Choices" [March 23] raised interesting questions about the increased emphasis on ethics committees and ethicists in health-care delivery. Only one thing marred the article: the date of Henry Beecher's "whistle-blowing article" in the *New England Journal of Medicine* was 1966, not 1996.

ROSEMARY FLANIGAN, C.S.J.
Kansas City, Mo.

New wineskins

Thank you for the "dueling versions of Vatican II" by James Hitchcock and John O'Malley [March 9]. We need that kind of dialogue to help penetrate the meaning of the most significant religious event of the twentieth century.

When most Catholics hear "Vatican II," they think of changes in the liturgy, but Vatican II was a council by the church about the church. The topic was ecclesiology. A change in the understanding of the church necessitates a change in the liturgy, since the liturgy is "the outstanding means by which Catholics express in their lives and manifest to others the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true church" (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 2).

Karl Rahner observed that Vatican II was the church's first self-actualization as a catholic (universal) church. At Vatican I, there were about eight hundred bishops from the whole world, but they were almost all Europeans. At Vatican II, there were over two thousand bishops truly representative of the areas from which they came. Their experiences helped to shape the council's view of the church. Before Vatican II, the church was a European entity—made up of the pope, the bishops, and priests—to which the people belonged. Vatican II recognized the church as the universal people of God. Its theme document is *Lumen gentium*. The key chapter is the second one, "The People of God." Strong forces are determined to keep the church European and clerical, but the Holy Spirit—who moved the council to become a new Pentecost—is still acting within the church.

Hitchcock is off the mark in thinking that the pertinent topics are liberalism and conservatism in their political and sociological meanings. O'Malley presents the matter concisely when he writes, "Vatican II was a doctrinal council. It taught about the church. It called for conversion from an old style of being church to a new style." (REV.) CHARLES E. MILLER, C.M.
Camarillo, Calif.

The light is Christ

James Hitchcock ["Version One," March 9] finds regrettable a "misunderstanding" of *Gaudium et spes* that has been partly the result of undue emphasis on the opening words used as its title. While "joy and hope" sound "an optimistic note...the next few words ('grief and anguish') immediately recognize the negative side of modernity."

In fact, the clear intent of the opening sentence is to emphasize the solidarity of Christians with their contemporaries: "*Gaudium et spes, luctus et angor hominum huius temporis...gaudium sunt et spes, luctus et angor etiam Christi discipulorum,*" means "The joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the people of the present day are likewise the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of Christ's disciples." It seems a bit of a stretch to read into this statement some kind of *monitum* about modernity.

Be that as it may, Hitchcock's cautionary words about misreadings of introductory phrases make his subsequent comment about *Lumen gentium* all the more remarkable. That decree, he writes, is "itself 'triumphalistic' (the church as the light of the world)." But the words that follow the first two make it quite clear that it is Christ who is the light: "*Lumen gentium cum sit Christus,*" which translates as "Since Christ is the light of nations." If Christ is the source of light, the church is authentically church only to the extent that it reflects that light. Affirming papal authority in that context is a far cry from triumphalism.

JULIAN IRIS
Davis, Calif.

The author replies:

The entire context of *Lumen gentium* is inescapably "papalist," including an affirmation of papal authority stronger, if possible, than even Vatican I. The "triumphalism" of *Gaudium et spes* is in the fact that the church expresses solidarity with the human race but in terms of the vital truth which humanity needs and which the church represents. JAMES HITCHCOCK

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Whan that Aprill...

From March 30 to April 1 the glorious cacophony that is American poetry was on display at the People's Poetry Gathering in New York City. Poet Laureate Stanley Kunitz presided over a meeting of folk, dub (reggae), political, formalist, avant-garde, and even more esoteric schools of poets. With its "slam" contests and seminars on "Poetry and Beauty," the gathering was an unusual, blessed exception to the current disconnect between elite and popular poetry. And it might be the start of a new kind of National Poetry Month.

Observed every April ("the cruellest month") since 1996, you'd think a month devoted to promoting America's poetic legacy and to bringing contemporary poets and poems to the attention of schools and a wider public would be uncontroversial. Think again.

Critics charge that the American Academy of Poets, founder of National Poetry Month, treats poems like castor oil. Read poems! They're good for you! The academy, the critics go on, sells poetry short by favoring message-oriented poems, and by seeking sponsorship from the very newspapers, publishers, and bookstore chains most responsible for increasing the difficulty that unknown but talented poets have getting heard and being printed.

But as with many protests, hyperbole and truth are intertwined. Are Americans so allegeric to poetry that they require an ad campaign to sell it? As regularly seen on PBS's "News Hour," former Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky's Favorite Poem Project decisively answers no. Pinsky and staff have been creating a video and audio collection of people from all walks of American life reading their favorite poems. The day Gwendolyn Brooks died, the "News Hour" played a file tape of her reading her poem "We Real Cool," about black teenagers on Chicago's South Side, followed by a video of a teenager reciting the same, from a rooftop of South Boston, and then explaining how the poem had helped him deal with the recent teen suicides in his working-class, white neighborhood. Nothing hokey about it. There is also a Web site, www.favoritepoem.org, that will leave any visitor heartened about the national poetic soul.

Does that mean the state of poetry is marvelous? Certainly not. Though poetry sales have risen almost 30 percent since 1996, much of that growth is in poets whose work is best described as sentimental dreck. Ezra Pound said "Make it new." Today's marketers say "Make it sell," and they, alas, seem to be in charge. Their strategy? Push the works of a few big-name poets, and beyond that target specific groups. Peruse a catalog or bookstore shelf: choose among women, African American, gay, teenage, Latino, or even cowboy poets. There is great poetry within every one of these categories—also lots of wishful thinking that poetry will lend an aura of authenticity to what is mere blather. But does anyone remember when poets aimed for a big audience and wrote about public events? In 1969, Neil Armstrong touched the moon and the *New York Times* op-ed page was filled with poems. Protesters took to the streets against the war in Vietnam, and poets Robert Bly, Denise Levertov, and many others took up their pens.

Today, it is a privilege to live among the electrifying cacophony on parade at the

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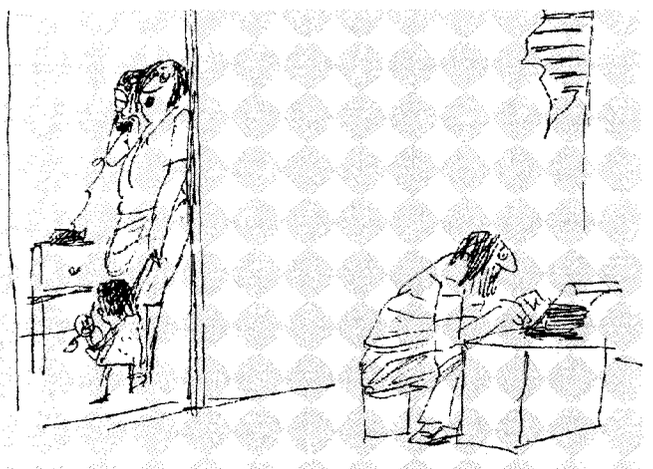
People's Poetry Gathering, rather than, say, to be in England where two poets—Seamus Heaney and the late Ted Hughes—account for 60 percent of poetry sales. Nonetheless, our national conversation about poetry is not nearly as inspiring as it could be. Where are the critics and reviewers writing for popular audiences (and the newspapers that will publish them!), the public poet-intellectuals, eager to sort out the good from the trivial in the astonishing variety and abundance of contemporary poetry? Americans have always embraced poetry, that is, popular poetry: ballads, folk songs, Broadway show tunes, and now slam poetry. But in the old days, popular poets and versifiers knew their high culture: they mocked and they borrowed. That happens rarely today. Ditto elite poets, who once wittily used popular culture. Those who do today are simply left out of the critical conversation.

High seriousness is a problem that the poet Frank O'Hara saw coming as early as 1959 when he wrote "Too many poets act like a middle-aged mother trying to get her kids to eat too much cooked meat, and potatoes with drippings (tears). I don't give a damn whether they eat or not....Nobody should experience anything they don't need to, if they don't need poetry bully for them. I like the movies too." What he could not know was how hostile the pace of culture would become to poetry. In order to read a poem you have to be still inside and attentive to the pleasure that can come from words qua words, or from a gorgeous image unfolding. You have to be open to a penetrating insight deeply imbedded in the stuff of language. Is there room for that in our hectic, pragmatic, advertising- and information-saturated lives?

No one really wants to jettison National Poetry Month, even when poets grumble that it could be more inclusive, more countercultural, edgier. This is a month when a child in school just might bump into a poem that makes him or her a reader of poetry for life. It's also a time when each of us can take down the book of Psalms, or Mother Goose, or an American giant—say, Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Frank O'Hara, Langston Hughes. Maybe in the midst of reading Whitman's windy *Song of Myself* you'll find a stunning set of images:



***"Poetry and welfare, and if it wasn't for the* welfare..."**

By the mechanic's wife with her babe at her nipple
interceding for every person born,
Three scythes at harvest whizzing in a row from three
lusty angels with shirts bagg'd out at their waists.

Maybe, thanks to Langston Hughes's "Theme for English B," you'll sit awhile with the possibilities (our comic history) and the discomforts (our tragic one) that stem from American diversity, be it of race, politics, or poetry:

Sometimes perhaps you don't want to be a part of me.
Nor do I often want to be a part of you.
But we are, that's true!

Poetry can help us see such truth, but not unless we allow it time to work on us. April is such a time.

ET CETERA

Numero uno ■ Sometimes it is worth the risk of reinforcing one stereotype to shatter another. It is, for example, a stereotype, now pretty faded, that American Catholics sit glued to their televisions (also radios), clutching rosaries (also beverages), cheering (also praying) for Notre Dame victories. Perhaps the Fighting Irish were once rivaled only by Al Smith as symbols of the Catholic struggle to arrive in the United States. That day is long past.

Ah, but the national championship, won on April 1, by Notre Dame's women's basketball team—that was different! If the university had historically provided an easily grasped image of Catholic leadership, that image, rooted in football, was unrelievedly male. The university admitted women years ago, but not without considerable resistance, of which traces here and there linger. Women's teams have already won four of the university's twenty-two national championships in various sports, the school's last one in women's soccer, in 1995. Now women have again brought the campus a national championship and in a major, televised sport.

Gender stereotypes were challenged in a variety of ways. There was the fact that the Notre Dame coach, Muffet McGraw, had once offered Connecticut's Gene Auriemma a job as her assistant, or that the husband of Purdue coach Kristy Curry actually serves as one of her assistants. In a different context, the cheering sisters from Cor Jesu Academy in Saint Louis, where Notre Dame star point guard Niele Ivey studied and played, might have looked like something out of *The Bells of Saint Mary's*. Here, their presence, even their modified habits, seemed to say, Don't make assumptions.

The final game against Purdue, in a night for Hoosiers, was not as pretty as it might have been. But the narrow 68-66 victory only balanced Notre Dame's incredible comeback from a 16-point deficit to a 90-75 victory in its semifinal match with last year's champions, the University of Connecticut.

We understand there is a fierce fight within the Vatican between those arguing that, Catholic or not, the Notre Dame starters should be immediately ordained and those arguing that they should only be granted a *mandatum*.

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SIDNEY CALLAHAN

SPIRITUAL SYMPTOMS

Does religion make you crazy?

The shades of Robert Lowell, Sylvia Plath, James Taylor, and *Girl Interrupted* hovered around the auditorium of McLean, the famed psychiatric hospital outside Boston—haven of celebrated patients. But I had been invited to speak to the staff association about spirituality—still a taboo subject in certain psychiatric circles. While nearly 90 percent of Americans report a belief in God, only 40 percent of psychologists do. A client might easily feel more free to mention intimate sexual matters than prayers or mystical experiences. In a secular milieu, religion can be the original "don't ask, don't tell" topic.

As both a defender of faith and a devout believer in psychology, I tried to provide my audience with a *DSM I*, or *Diagnoses of Spiritual Movements*. Recently, *DSM IV*, or the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* of mental disorders, the bible of the mental-health establishment, has been amended to include an entry for nonpathological symptoms of "religious crises" or "spiritual emergencies." Under this rubric, folks like Francis of Assisi, Ignatius Loyola, or Teresa of Avila might be able to escape hospitalization despite their strange mystical experiences.

But how can you tell pathological psychotic episodes from positive spiritual experiences? Today, differential diagnosis, or in religious language, discernment of spirits, will follow the traditional gospel criteria: By their fruits you shall know them. As William James pointed out long ago, if Saint Teresa had extremely abnormal mental states, no matter. Her visions, ecstasies, and levitations coexisted with whirlwind efficiency, lively charm, and astute charitable work.

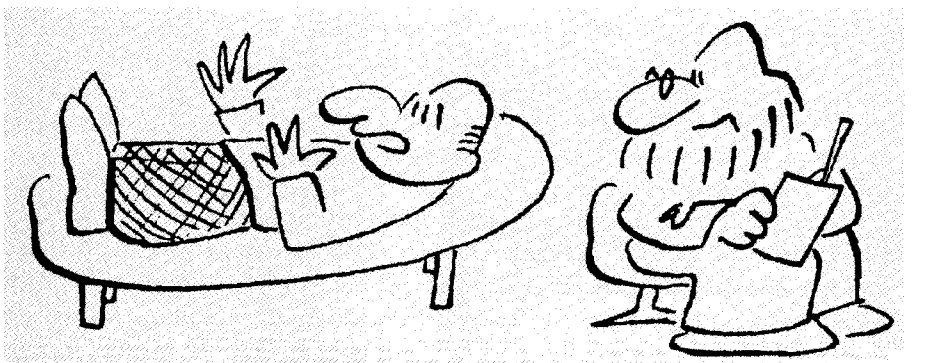
If, however, mystical effusions produce grandiosity, arrogant hostility, and an inability to work or get along with people, watch out. Joan of Arc heard voices but she was a fount of common sense and courageous leadership. I keep her words on my desk: "Today rather than tomorrow, tomorrow rather than the next day—the Holy Spirit has no love for the lazy."

But in a discussion of spirituality you don't have to start at the top, with the Holy Spirit, identified as one divine person of the triune God. Better to begin with a bottom-up analysis of the slippery word "spirit." The human spirit with a small *s* can refer to personal consciousness and moments of awareness which are heightened by an investment of emotion and aesthetic response. A "secular spirituality" can consist of ad hoc heightened responses to the world, without any recognition of a transcendent reality beyond the powers of the human organism. Secular spiritualities can emerge in art, music, nature, exercise, sex, diet, crystal gazing, dreams, creative work, martial arts, or fly-fishing. Many practices that give pleasure and heightened cognitive awareness are meaningful to persons without being attributed to divine reality.

When people tell you, "I'm spiritual but not religious," they can be referring to their meaningful moments of secular spirituality. Or they may be referring to forms of "stripped-down spirituality," which go beyond the natural and seek transcendent meaning. Here the spiritual person tries to get in touch with, or become attuned to, some larger reality of Spirit, with a capital *S*—a Great Spirit, World Spirit, or Higher Power. Persons pursue the Spirit through meditation, prayer, worship, vision quests, or a disciplined practice. "Peak experiences," or epiphanies, can ensue and induce a belief in a benevolent ordered reality. When the Good is identified with the Spirit, then a demand for right action becomes necessary. Seekers must embrace the ethical requirements of truth and compassion, whether in an eightfold way or a twelve-step program. The numinous and the ethical become fused. Many eclectic forms of stripped-down spirituality exist in America and attract seekers who have an allergy to doctrine and religious institutions.

By contrast there is nothing stripped-down about the high traditional monotheistic religions in which the Spirit is a personal, transcendent wholly Other, Holy One. The children of Abraham—following Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, as peoples of the book—worship a God who is a self-revealing creator and who exists as both transcendent and immanent. Traditional worldwide high religions have prophets and scriptures, and they give birth to historical communities of continuity and reforming sects. They provide well-winnowed guidance for the spiritual seeker.

In Christianity the Holy Spirit is worshiped as working in the world to inspire, heal, console, empower, and sanc-



"You've convinced me that nobody is out to get me, and now my life is **totally** *without meaning!"*

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tify human hearts, the church community, and the whole of creation. I think a Christian could be justified in claiming that the aspirations of the human spirit in secular spiritualities and in stripped-down spiritualities are manifestations of the Holy Spirit. Once, however, you assert that the creation is not God but God's good work, doctrines of pantheism will not apply. With the Christian doctrine of Incarnation firmly in place, embodied humans keep their unique identities for eternity. The resurrection of the body ensures that devotees do not melt away into some form of Nirvana.

Once a seeker gets caught up in a "non-stripped-down" "nonsecular" spirituality of a traditional high religion, the way to holiness requires blood, sweat, and tears. The arduous path of discipline leads away from egotism, illusion, and self-deception—as well as toward joyful celebration, thank God.

More to the point, a full-strength, high-test spirituality propels a seeker toward sanity and wisdom. You may not end up wealthy or healthy, or die safely in bed, but the Holy Spirit does not lead to mental pathology. Therapists should not be afraid or censor explorations of spirituality. Why not take a spiritual history on intake? Spiritual autobiographies are enlightening, especially for atheists and agnostics.

For years, McLean Hospital's chapel has gone unused, with no chaplain or pastoral counseling program any longer in place. That's a shame, for both the staff and the patients. □

OF SEVERAL MINDS

WILLIAM PFAFF

U.S. MYOPIA

The world does not revolve around Washington

Anti-Americanism abroad preoccupies many Americans concerned with their country's place in the world, but the phenomenon is often misread in political and policy circles. This leads to misunderstanding of the nature and cause of anti-Americanism.

Journalism is partly responsible, since coverage of international affairs in the U.S. press and television now is almost entirely Washington-driven. That is, the questions asked about foreign affairs are Washington's questions, framed in terms of domestic politics and established Washington policy positions. This invites uninformative answers and discourages unwanted or unpleasant news.

Matters that do not directly address Washington concerns tend to be ignored, since it is generally assumed that anything Washington is not paying attention to can't be very important. Thus, the reality-rating of much debate in the capital is not very high.

Secretary of the Treasury Paul O'Neill's comments on Japan earlier this year provide a case in point. He said that because of Japan's currently deplorable economic performance, something should be done "to help the people of Japan achieve a higher standard of living." As Doug Struck of the *Washington Post* pointed out in a caustic dispatch, Japan's actual problem is that its living standard and level of consumer satisfaction are both so high today—much higher on average than in the United States—that Japanese consumers can't think of much they'd want to spend more money on. The result is flat consumer purchasing and depressed manufacturing in what, by objective standards, is the richest country in the world.

O'Neill, not atypically (American businessman he is), took it for granted that everyone else in the world lives a backward life by U.S. standards. He didn't know what he was talking about, but this is often equally true of officials from a nonbusiness background. America's various controversies with the European Union tend to be described, even in official circles, as caused by "European subsidies" for its industries, or "fortress European" protectionism to fend off hypercompetitive U.S. rivals.

The notion that European products (or Japanese ones) might be more advanced than American products, and that trade problems include loss of competitiveness and need for protection by some U.S. industries, is not widely conceded.

The foreign competitive challenge nonetheless was one factor behind Boeing's surprising announcement last month that it will leave Seattle, reportedly "to break the company's physical and psychological identification with commercial aviation." It wants investors and Wall Street to stop thinking that the company's fortunes depend on selling civil aircraft against Europe's competition.

Manifestations of anti-Americanism otherwise can roughly be divided between those with objective, and those with subjective, causes. The latter is an imprecise category but includes the anti-Americanism that derives from value differences.

Foreign criticism of the adolescent standards of U.S. popular culture and entertainment, fast foods, genetic manipulation of food, gun laws, the death penalty, and so forth can all be put down to value difference, and little or nothing can be done about it. Americans take for granted the way they live, and others can like it or not.

The objective causes for anti-Americanism are policies and actions seen abroad as damaging to the legitimate interests of other countries or to international standards of conduct, or which encourage international lawlessness. The angry reaction in Europe and Japan against the Bush administration's rejection of the 1997 Kyoto agreement on reducing greenhouse gas emissions—principal subject of disagreement during German Chancellor Schroeder's recent Washington visit—holds that the United States is ignoring the general international interest in preventing global warming. This stance is seen as a cynical payback to industry campaign contributors, indifferent to larger human concerns. The Bush administration promises a future, new approach

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to global warming, but the violently anti-American reaction of the present moment is inescapable.

The U.S. government's hostility to the treaty creating an international tribunal on crimes against humanity, and its refusal to ratify the treaty banning land mines, are widely seen as American refusals to hold itself to standards other nations are prepared to accept. The United States is held to contribute to international lawlessness by unilateral attacks on "rogue" nations and what it calls terrorist targets. The same accusation is made against U.S. vetoes of UN efforts to restrain Israel from what many consider the unjust and immoral use of collective punishments and disproportionate violence against Palestinian resistance to Israel's illegal colonization of Palestinian territories.

Finally, there are what can be called the hegemony issues. Some opposition to the United States, identified as anti-Americanism, is actually motivated by the classic balance-of-power concerns of other major nations aware of their current vulnerability to U.S. power. Peter W. Rodman of the Nixon Center wrote very sensibly last summer in *The National Interest*, a Washington quarterly, about the mistaken American assumption that because it considers itself acting on universal moral principles, opposition is illegitimate. Western Europe, Japan, and many third-world countries "view the emergence of the United States as the sole superpower as a mixed blessing" because this has destroyed international balance.

That is not anti-Americanism, as Rodman remarks. Comparative power considerations are behind it, and the quest for balance—which history validates. □

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David B. Burrell

WARRING STORIES

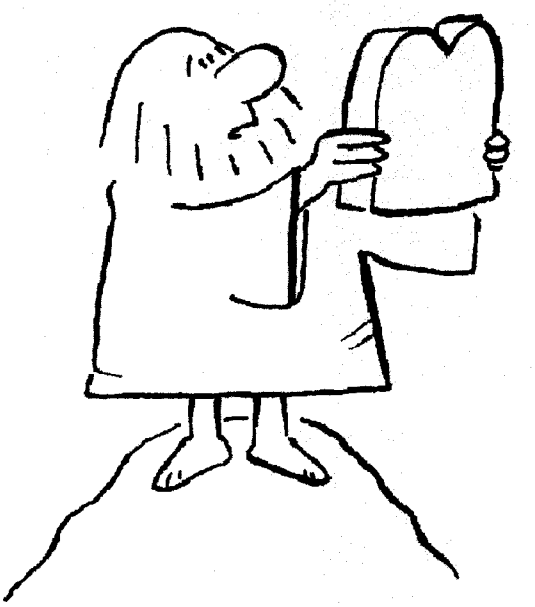
Israeli settlers & the Palestinians

A recent appeal from the General Union of Palestinian Women relates the following story: "The latest victims of settler aggression have, unfortunately, fallen on the eve of the blessed Eid Al Adha (the Feast of Sacrifice). Ubai Darraj, yet another child of nine, had just had a haircut in excited anticipation of the Eid, when his life was terminated by gunfire from the settlement of Pisgot built on the lands of El Bireh, as he was helping his father paint their new home. Aida Fteiha had just finished her Eid shopping and was rushing back home to bring a measure of joy to her three young children when she was fatally shot by a bullet from that same settlement."

Ask nearly any Israeli about such things, and you will be told that this must have been in response to fire from the Palestinian village; Israeli settlers don't just shoot people randomly. Yet the fact is that they do. The tracer shells aimed at Beit Jala on the evening I arrived at Tantur from Cairo, which killed a young man in his room, were not provoked but were reportedly fired when a "suspicious group" was spotted from the artillery station across the vast wadi in the urban settlement of Gilo. Victims of settler vigilante activity, plus those felled by lethal fire from the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), have been assiduously catalogued by the Palestinian Committee on Human Rights. If a peace and reconciliation commission should ever be inaugurated, all the relevant data will be available. But, of course, each of these lives is far more than a bit of data, and the greatest tragedy in the current "situation" (the going euphemism for all that is taking place) is that few friendships span these two societies so that stereotypes prevail. In fact, two distinct stories of recent events are emerging, each of which tends to cancel the other.

Israelis who supported the "peace process" feel massively "let down" by the Palestinian leadership, symbolized by Arafat, and many of them are now paralyzed by their society's pervasive fear. (The ingrained habit of carrying arms may project a macho image; yet, in fact, it betrays a massive fear.) Self-examination is replaced by Arab-bashing, with a fixation on Arafat: "Barak gave them the best they could hope for; indeed, he went far beyond the Israeli consensus, and they turned it down! How can there be any progress?"

These are the words of someone who longed for peace, who realized that Israel could not retain its own integrity by continuing the occupation, but who became deeply disillusioned when Arafat would not "play ball." The next step is to attribute venal motives to the entire Palestinian lead-



"I'm sorry, but the Knesset voted these down 57–29."

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ership, insisting that they organized the al-Aqsa *intifada* in advance while Ariel Sharon's provocative incursion of the Haram al-Sharif on September 29, 2000 is defended as "his right." And then the refrain: "Arabs can't be trusted; these reports you cite are propaganda; not even settlers would (or could) act with such impunity."

Beyond the exculpatory character of this account lies a presumption yet more insidious. The entire peace process is innocently regarded as one in which Israeli generosity is met with Palestinian ingratitude: "We gave them the best they could ever expect, and they rejected it!" There is little sense that, despite its overwhelming power, Israel alone cannot set the rules; negotiations are not simply horse-trading. Palestinians are quick to detect that premise which seems to escape Israelis (yet, Henry Siegman exposed it astutely in his comment in the *New York Review of Books*, February 8).

The Palestinians' story does not contradict my Israeli friend, but rather calls attention to facts that have impinged on Palestinian lives since Oslo, when they were praised for entering the arena of horse-trading. With a few prominent naysayers, most of us were thrilled that the Palestinians seemed willing to swap land for peace. Yet our endemic Western presumption has always been that half a loaf will gradually yield more. The seven years since Oslo told the Palestinian public otherwise: they had been invited to play on Israel's turf, to exchange freedom from the patrols of the IDF in their cities for yet more settler encroachment into the territory they anticipated recovering on the basis of international law. Moreover, playing ball on terms set by Israel and the United States hardly benefited the average Palestinian. Rather, principals in the Palestinian Authority profited. As a consequence, the *intifada* was directed as much against the Palestinians' own leadership as releasing pent-up frustration against continual humiliation at the increasing number of Israeli checkpoints.

Descriptions cannot serve as justifications, of course, yet the descriptions proper to each side in any conflict must be heard. Here lies a further source of frustration for Palestinians: the overwhelming bias of reporting. We read about Israelis killed by Palestinian mobs, yet are seldom, if ever, given the scantiest biography of a defenseless villager executed by settler vigilantes. A recent Palestinian lament is especially poignant:

> Is not the Israeli occupation destroying every aspect of Palestinian life in this so-called Holy Land—holy to the three monotheistic faiths? When will the U.S. administration and the British government and their allies have the courage to force Israel to end this brutal and destructive occupation? The civilized State of Israel, with its sophisticated and progressive machinery and supposedly democratic institutions, has to be challenged by the world community for its actions as an occupying force. When Palestinian houses are demolished, their olive groves bulldozed, and trenches dug in roads to cut off Palestinian areas from each other, such actions are violence, not civilization or democracy. Israel should not be allowed to justify all its actions because of its security paranoia. The security of Israel will only be guaranteed once it abides by the United Nations resolutions, and ends its occupation of the Palestinian Territories.

What is being exposed in Israel today is a society suffering from having to cover up two decisive contradictions woven into its very fabric: one in 1948 and the other in 1967. Palestinian insistence on the "right of return" (which Clinton proposed they simply renounce) is less a threat to flood Israeli society with returnees—for few Palestinians would feel at home there—than a way to register a profound need to hear Israel say officially what even its own historians have recently underscored: that the homecoming of one people meant the home-wrecking of another. Such a public acknowledgment would doubtless entail some form of compensation, but it would also clear the Israeli conscience. The experience of nations that have managed such a recognition is that life can go on, repentant, whereas lack of repentance reinforces a false consciousness that blames the other as it lashes out at them.

As for 1967, it was Yesheyahu Leibowitz, the polymath turned prophet, who insisted that Israel give back the territories won in the war, for a Jewish state (in the normative sense of "Jewish") could hardly rule over unwilling subjects who had no hope of citizenship. Many Israelis are willing to acknowledge this standing contradiction in their polity, as it requires their young men and women to enforce the occupation. The ideological settlers resist it totally, insisting that God gave it all to the Jews.

The result, however, is a situation in which the attitudes of a largely discredited minority, the ideological settlers, seem to be determining Israeli politics, notably by reinforcing an internal closure on Palestinian villages—lest the villagers come in contact with settlers—which is strangling that fledgling society by denying its citizens access to work, and thus to food, as well as medical assistance. Moreover, as the stories of aggressive mistreatment at the multifarious checkpoints multiply, one can hardly imagine how this is affecting the young Israeli men and women who are called upon to enforce so draconian a policy.

The Sharon government is learning how to tell the outside world that it is "letting up on the pressure" while continuing to deny the Palestinians access to work. Our only hope is that the message will get out, as it often has, despite media bias. Here the Internet helps, as those receiving messages from the Christian Peacemaker Team in Hebron can testify. While the saddest indicator of the distance between these two societies is the paucity of friendships that span their borders, that fact also suggests where NGOs, synagogues, churches, and mosques can fruitfully renew their efforts. □

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MISPLACED NOSTALGIA

'Ex corde' & the medieval university

Jean Porter

Ex corde ecclesiae will go into effect as church law for the United States on May 3, 2001. For most commentators, the fundamental issue concerning the implementation of *Ex corde* is the conflict between the ideals and practices of American higher education, as these have emerged in a liberal, secular society, and the ideals and practices informing a distinctively Catholic tradition of learning. Those who criticize *Ex corde*, especially its requirement that theologians obtain a mandate from the local bishop, do so on the ground that it will lead to violations of academic freedom, or that it will destroy the credibility of Catholic higher education in this country. Those who defend it reply that Catholic universities should be governed by a different set of ideals, in which accountability to the church and demonstrated fidelity to its teachings are paramount.

Much of this debate presupposes a certain perspective on the history of Catholic higher education. In this view, the earliest Catholic universities, emerging as they did from "the heart of the church," were very closely connected to, and under the control of, ecclesiastical authorities. Scholars working in such a context, it is thought, had no aspirations to freedom of inquiry, and would probably have considered such aspirations as expressions of a dangerous disloyalty. It is certainly the case that the scholastics did not defend an ideal of academic freedom as we understand it today. It is hard to see how they could have done so, since this ideal presupposes a set of institutional arrangements that were not in place in the twelfth century. However, scholastics neither defended nor practiced an ideal of complete subordination to ecclesiastical authorities. Yes, medieval scholars were concerned with accountability, but they also defended freedom to conduct research and teaching as they saw fit. Moreover, the institutional expressions of these commitments were shaped by many factors, including religious and social anxieties and a lot of good old academic and church politics—in other words, by forces very similar to those at work in our own day. We have much to learn from our medieval forebears, but we cannot turn to them for an ideal or example of scholarly humility or subservience.

The European university emerged in the twelfth century out of loose associations of master scholars and their students. In contrast to monasteries and cathedral schools, the universities developed from a felt need for a new educational system not tied to any particular locality. The twelfth century was a period of institutional centralization, reform, and expansion. In this context, the university proved to be an ideal training ground for the kinds of scholars and professional men needed to staff the new ecclesiastical and civil bureaucracies.

In the parlance of the time, a university, or *studium generale*, was first of all a school that accepted students from all over Europe. The university was also distinguished by the fact that it had a community of scholars in residence (as opposed to one or two masters), including at least one professional faculty offering a degree in theology, law, or medicine. Every university also had a faculty of arts, which included what we would call liberal studies and especially philosophy. In addition, a university could offer its students the *jus ubique docendi*, the right to teach which would be recognized anywhere, something like the modern Ph.D.

From their inception, universities were involved in conflict. Because the new universities were national or supra-

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national institutions rather than parochial or diocesan, they were natural allies for both the papacy and the monarchies in their struggles against local bishops, who were at that time more or less independent, and often quite formidable forces. Furthermore, the universities quickly became a locus of conflict between the regular clergy and the newer mendicant orders, especially the Dominicans and the Franciscans. The mendicants often operated independently of local bishops, thereby becoming natural allies of the papacy, which in turn strengthened the hand of the orders in the university. Still, the most fundamental and persistent source of tension was internal to the university structure itself. Not surprisingly, the masters of arts, primarily the philosophers, fought for the independence and autonomy of their discipline, while theologians attempted to keep philosophical speculation within "proper" bounds.

These conflicts provided the context within which demands for accountability and claims for the freedom of research and teaching were articulated. Such claims did not arise as abstract matters of principle. Rather, they emerged over specific issues, which almost always included both theological concerns and what might be described broadly as organizational or juridical arrangements. We do not find scholars calling for a general and unrestricted freedom of research and teaching. However, with increasing directness and forcefulness university faculties did demand freedom and autonomy. Philosophers insisted on their independence from theologians, theologians called for their freedom from local bishops, and members of religious orders demanded autonomy from members of other orders and from the secular clergy.

In such a context, it can be difficult to articulate the exact parameters of freedom and accountability. The institutional forms of both university and church were in flux and overlapped to a considerable degree. For example, at the University of Paris, which included the preeminent theology faculty of the time, both masters and students could claim with some justice to speak for the church. They were all considered to be clerics, and most of them were aligned with ecclesiastical structures through multiple affiliation with a local bishop, the papacy, or one of the religious orders.

Given these facts, it is not surprising that the lines of freedom and accountability within the university emerged out of struggles over authority in the church, more specifically between the local bishop and the papacy. Originally, scholars in Paris had to be granted a license to teach by the chancellor of the university—a requirement not unlike *Ex corde*'s mandate—since the chancellor acted with the authority of the bishop of Paris. And, in fact, around the turn of the thirteenth century, the chancellor of the University of Paris attempted to extend his authority by requiring masters of the university to take an oath of obedience to him.

"Had he succeeded," Hastings Rashdall wrote in his classic history of the medieval university, "either the universi-

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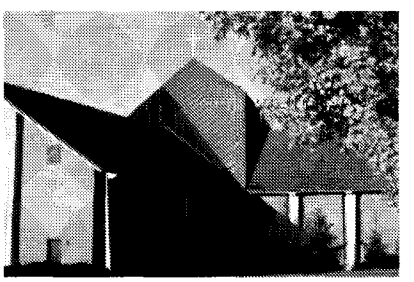

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ty could not have continued to exist or the chancellor's position in it would have become even more powerful than that of the chancellor of Oxford in the days when he was really the bishop's officer and before the masters had succeeded in making him merely the executor of their own decrees." But the masters appealed to the papacy, and as Rashdall says, "the papacy, with that unerring instinct which marks its earlier history, sided with the powers of the future, the university of masters, and against the efforts of a local hierarchy to keep education in leading-strings."

In short, the mechanisms that will be implemented in Catholic universities under *Ex corde* are dramatically opposed to the policies of the medieval papacy toward higher education. Indeed, in a bull of 1212, Pope Innocent III relaxed the obligations of prior oaths and forbade the exaction of similar oaths in the future.

Despite the complexity of both university and ecclesiastical structures in the medieval period, some generalizations can be made about the ways in which scholars attempted to balance freedom and accountability. The twelfth century saw mostly ad hoc calls to investigate and discipline individual scholars, usually initiated by individual churchmen or other scholars rather than by episcopal or papal authority. By the thirteenth century, regular procedures for balancing these claims emerged. For example, young men who went through the course of study and teaching necessary to receive a license to teach had their views scrutinized by their academic masters. Junior scholars who propounded questionable views would be asked to explain and correct them publicly, and if they did so, their careers did not seem to have been much affected by the process. More problematic, theologians sometimes attempted to monitor and control their colleagues in the faculty of arts, particularly the philosophers, who were often looked on as dangerous quasi-heretical radicals. But the philosophers had resources of their own. The faculty of arts in Paris, for example, outnumbered the theologians by a considerable margin, and, more important, anyone interested in studying in one of the higher faculties first had to pass through a course of philosophical study. Naturally, the methods and perspectives of philosophy increasingly infiltrated theology itself. This system of checks and balances came to extend beyond the university as well. By the mid-fourteenth century, the theologians of Paris were generally regarded as the arbiters of doctrinal authority, and they were consulted as such by popes and bishops alike. When it came to the exercise of authority, it was almost always a two-way street.

In short, the mechanisms that will be implemented in Catholic universities under* Ex corde *are dramatically opposed to the policies of the medieval papacy toward higher education.

This brings us to a point often made, but worth repeating. Thanks to the intellectual assumptions and practices of scholasticism in the high Middle Ages, scholars were trained as a matter of course to consider a wide range of views and to give serious consideration to intellectual options they almost certainly would have rejected on the grounds of faith. Again, we cannot simply equate the ethos of scholasticism with modern secular ideals of intellectual inquiry: The scholastics certainly took the parameters set by Christian dogma seriously, and for the theologians, in particular, any final resolution of a dispute would have to fall within those parameters. Nonetheless, scholastic theologians did not spend their time simply defending the doctrines articulated by the magisterium. Rather, they helped to formulate Christian thought in a context in which a wide diversity of views was considered as a matter of course, and any formulated position had to stand the test of rigorous challenge and debate.

In the course of his comprehensive history of scientific thought in the medieval period, the historian David Lindberg remarks, "It must be emphatically stated that within this educational system the medieval master had a great deal of freedom. There was almost no doctrine, philosophical or theological, that was not submitted to minute scrutiny and criticism by scholars in the medieval university."

The history of this period reveals surprising points of contact between our present difficulties and the challenges faced by our medieval forebears. I would suggest three points at which the history of the early medieval university illuminates our situation.

- First, in the medieval university accountability and freedom were communal ideals as well as individual claims.
- Second, these universities accepted both a degree of independence and authority on the part of scholars themselves.
- Finally, the balance struck between these ideals depended on a situation in which diversity of opinions and freedom of debate were built into the academic process.

In many respects, then, the medieval balance between freedom and accountability is closer to a modern ideal of academic freedom than we might at first suspect. Academic freedom comprises two kinds of freedom, that is, freedom in research and freedom in teaching. It implies that a scholar should not be censored or penalized for what he or she says in scholarly publications and lectures or in the classroom. Correlatively, however, it also requires that individual scholars conduct their teaching and research in a responsible way, and that, when necessary, the scholarly community calls individual members to account. Practically, this responsibility involves training and accrediting students, guiding younger scholars, and granting tenure after a probationary period. In this respect, the academic profession functions like most other professions where the practitioners themselves set the standards for training and accreditation, and have a decisive say in determining who meets those standards.

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Very few Catholic theologians would deny the legitimacy and importance of the teaching function of the magisterium, that is, the formulation of doctrines that express the essential elements of Christian belief. These doctrines serve to set the boundaries that preserve our integrity as a community of faith. Yet if drawn too tightly, boundaries can strangle the community life they are meant to preserve. In the high Middle Ages, the built-in diversity of scholasticism preserved a freedom of debate that kept the boundaries of doctrine from becoming strangleholds. In our own time, the academic freedom exercised by theologians serves a similar indispensable function.

In saying this, I do not mean to imply that medieval scholars would have endorsed precisely our notions of academic freedom. Nonetheless, the modern norm of academic freedom functions in a way analogous to the structures of the medieval university. American Catholics have a stake in preserving academic freedom among theologians, not only to preserve the credibility of our colleges and universities in a secular society, but also to preserve and foster a vigorous life of theological inquiry, without which the church community as a whole cannot flourish.

In this light, *Ex corde* raises serious concerns. In particular, the requirement of the mandate, if enforced, will have serious negative consequences on Catholic theology in this country. Not only will it undermine the freedom of the individual scholar, it will also undermine the processes for collective self-regulation and self-governance. It would also have the result, so far scarcely noted, of undermining the teaching orders of priests and religious sisters. Jesuits or Sisters of the Holy Cross, who were once under obedience to the head of their orders, will no longer be able to staff the theology faculties of their own colleges and universities without the approval of the local ordinary. It is ironic that today, in the name of returning the Catholic university to the heart of the church, we are reversing one of the foundations of the medieval university, namely its independence from local authorities and its status as a genuinely international body of scholars. At the same time, because of the structure of the modern episcopacy, *Ex corde* and its norms for implementation will place Catholic colleges and universities more firmly under the control of Rome than ever before—which is, of course, the intent of the original document.

Recent discussions of *Ex corde* have all too often failed to address critical questions: Accountability to whom, and for what? If we take seriously the decrees of Vatican II, according to which all Catholics together compose the Catholic church, then there is a real difference between accountability to the church and accountability to individual bishops. Real accountability requires that all parties have a share in authority as well as responsibility for answering to others. Ironically, our forebears in the Middle Ages did a better job of creating and sustaining such a framework. Our task is not to imitate them but to find ways to bring about, in our own time, a similar institutional integrity and flexibility. □

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FINDING 'THE CATHOLIC THING'

In Aquinas, Marx & Billie Holiday

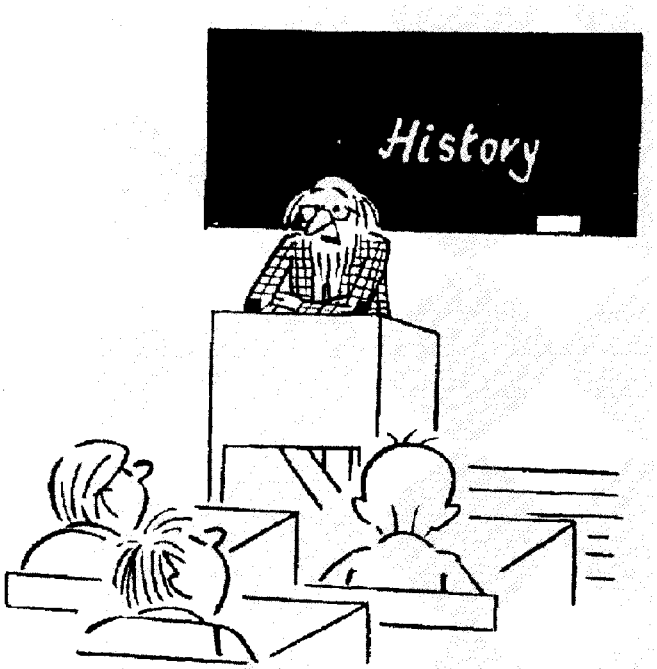
Paul Crowley

Catholic studies programs seem to be springing up like mushrooms all over the country. Typically, these programs involve the awarding of a certificate or a minor, and in some cases bachelor's and master's degrees. They range from well-funded and highly developed enterprises such as the program at the University of Saint Thomas in Saint Paul, Minnesota, to modest interdisciplinary programs such as the one at Santa Clara University in California. Not only Catholic universities, but some secular ones as well, are in the process of establishing some kind of Catholic studies program or chair. Some of these programs signal a healthy reinvigoration of Catholicism and interest in the Catholic faith tradition at a time when many people inside and outside the church question some of the directions taken by the Catholic church in the past few years. In many places, these programs are attracting students who are eager to learn more about their faith and to delve into it more deeply, even in places where there already seem to be many excellent existing resources for the study of Catholicism. The existence of these programs is already generating a cottage industry involving conferences, publications, research grants, and academic working groups at national academic meetings of theologians and religious scholars.

Yet, after serving for five years as director of the small interdisciplinary program at Santa Clara University, I am led to ask: Why? To what needs do these various programs respond? What has given rise to them? And if we are to have them, then what should they be doing?

The why question calls for a complex answer, because each of these collegiate programs has a distinct history. I attended my first Catholic studies conference, sponsored by the University of Saint Thomas, four years ago. Scores of schools with various types of programs were in attendance. What struck me was how widely divergent these programs were in their origins, goals, and modes of operation. It was clear that "Catholic studies" did not describe any single model of an academic field, much less any unified view of Catholicism itself. The Santa Clara program, for example, was the result of a discussion among some faculty in the religious studies department more than ten years ago, when a Protestant faculty member proposed a concentration in Catholic studies for students interested in pursuing a high school teaching career. Gradually, faculty from other departments were brought into the conversation. Concurrently, Santa Clara, like other Catholic universities, was engaged in a long-range process of articulating its Catholic character and Jesuit mission. Some faculty involved in the initial conversations about Catholic studies were involved in these discussions as well. A further factor was the existence at Santa Clara of a number of small, interdisciplinary minors (Medieval/Renaissance studies, classical studies, women's and gender studies) created by faculty interested in establishing a focused yet interdepartmental scholarly community around topics of shared interest. Finally, there was a perceived need to offer students a venue within the university where Catholicism could be studied even more richly than within the religious studies department.

The result was an interdepartmental minor, run on a very modest budget, borrowing from much existing course stock,



"I'll put it to a democratic vote. Which do you prefer, the dialectical materialistic approach, or kings and battles?"

Paul Crowley, S.J., *is associate professor of religious studies at Santa Clara University, and author of* In Ten Thousand Places: Dogma in a Pluralistic Church *(Crossroad/Herder).*

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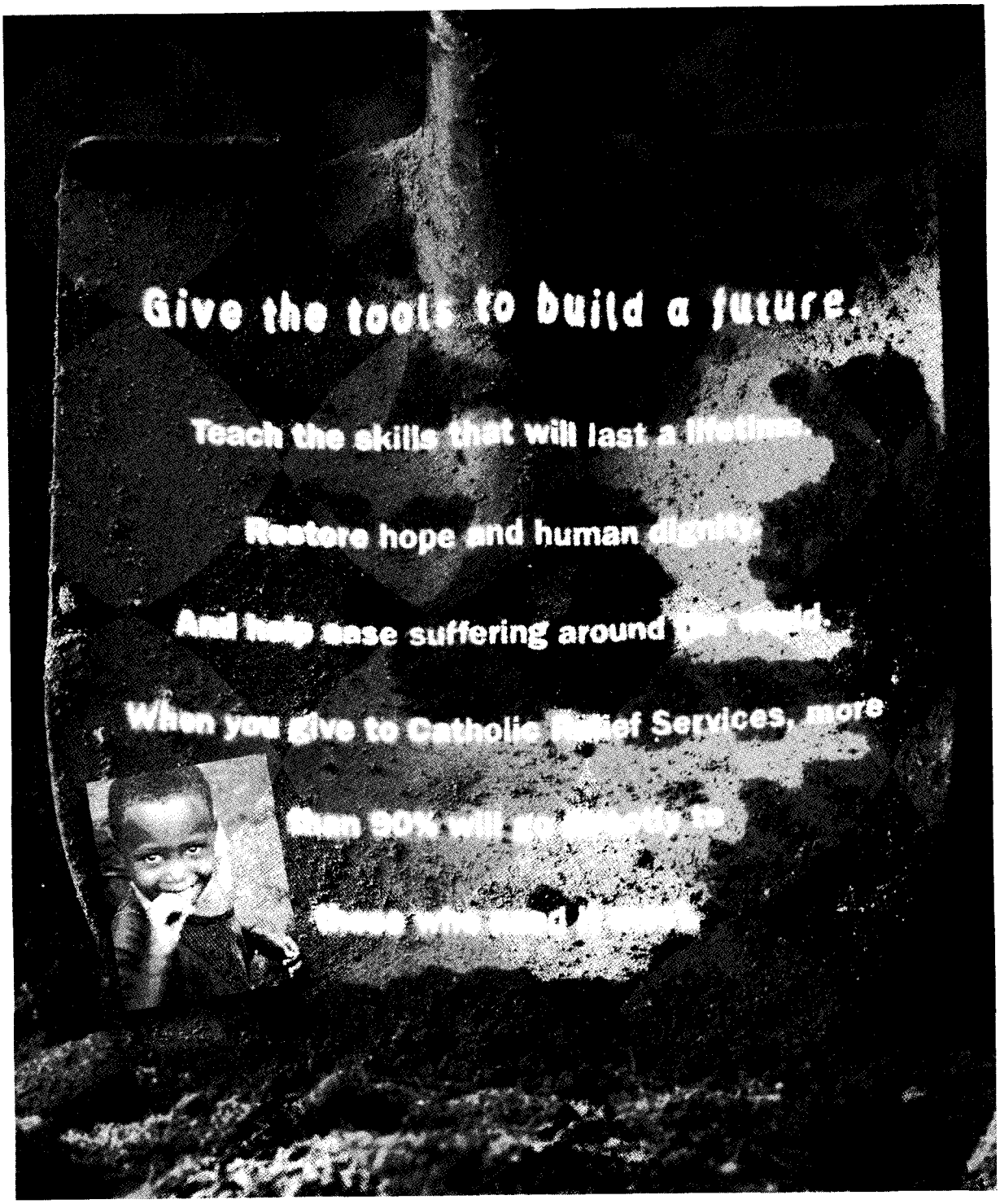
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and offering students an intellectual and at times social community within which they could join faculty in the pleasures of delving into various dimensions of Catholicism. While the faculty involved hoped that the program might have a ripple effect throughout the university, encouraging the further development of courses in Catholic heritage, all agreed that this should occur organically and over time in ways congruent with academic life, and not through any administrative fiat. There was no hidden hand guiding the project, no big money coming from outside patrons, and no explicit ecclesiastical ideology shaping the outcome. The project depended almost wholly upon the enthusiasm of a few faculty members and students. Once approved through normal committee channels, it earned the attention and support of the administration. The aim was to grow, but gradually, and not to become too large. Catholic studies would assume a respected role alongside other established interdisciplinary minors at Santa Clara.

Modest programs like this could be a sign that Catholicism, and perhaps more generally, "the Catholic" as an idea, is worth studying in and of itself, at least as a religious phenomenon, but not only that. At least in the Western cultural context, Catholicism as a religion finds itself to be a modern development, that is, a religion whose main lines were established in the sixteenth century after Trent but which now faces a crisis at what could be called the closure of modernity. Especially in the United States, it is a religion of theological and cultural boundaries in an environment where older boundaries of all types—ethnic, racial, gender and sexual, political, religious, even sacrosanct national borders—are dissolving in the search for a new human constellation. Yet, North American Catholics have been living in a cultural mix for the past three hundred years, and have a long experience of pushing beyond a Catholic provincialism toward a Catholic cosmopolitanism in a culture that was not established by the church itself. And as a world religion, Catholicism finds itself cheek by jowl with other world religions, a fact that should not only challenge Catholic theologians to specify the parameters of orthodoxy, but encourage an understanding of Catholicism precisely as a religion among the religions.

As an academic field, then, Catholic studies would do a disservice to the reality of Catholicism if it saw all of these (and many other "postmodern") developments as enemies to be fought in a countercultural war rather than as the reality within which Catholicism can be understood anew. Of course Catholicism faces many crises from within and severe challenges from without. But Catholic studies programs would do well to transcend simplistic within/without, "us-against-the-world" binaries, if indeed one of the aims of a Catholic studies program is to pass on a living tradition, one incarnated within the cultures in which it is lived. If Catholic studies is to have any apologetics edge, it cannot be a purely defensive one.

Some academics, such as Tom Ferraro of Duke, have approached Catholicism as a cultural phenomenon, studying how people "do" this religion: their liturgical, devotional, and prayer lives; their ethnic and cultural practices and traditions; their art and music and food. In his anthology, *Catholic Lives, Contemporary America*, Ferraro describes a "mysterious catholicity" that includes but extends beyond theology: "I am especially interested in how fundamental Catholic discourses—iconicity and ritual, Original Sin and sacramentality, intercessory mediation and Corpus Christi—function in social and cultural contexts beyond the narrowly religious, including where least expected. To me, cultural as a qualifier to Catholicism does not necessarily mean dilution or dissolution—a draining of the religious imagination into banal secularity—but can in fact signify the opposite, a form of transfigurative reenvisioning that refuses to quarantine the sacred." Ferraro is talking about what scholars since William Lynch and David Tracy have called the "analogical imagination" of Catholicism—the ability of the believer to root understanding in faith but also to extend beyond the boundaries of church itself in a grasp of the larger world.

Ferraro may be on to something here. Perhaps Catholic studies could lead to such a transfigurative reenvisioning of "the Catholic" within the academic setting. In this scenario, Catholic studies seek not to defend Catholicism from a threatening secularist academe, but rather to understand Catholicism as a religious and cultural phenomenon within the spectrum of realities that compose the subject matter of the contemporary university. Catholic studies would not propose an integrating vision for the university (something only faith itself could do); rather it would try to open up Catholicism in an academic way, and, as an interdisciplinary field, even to invite other than Catholic "experts" to explore it.

How would we do this? I would argue for a Catholic intellectualism that turns Catholicism outward to the myriad manifestations of a religion that lives in a world of many sensibilities, rather than inward toward a conceptually clean point of convergence. At Santa Clara, we have tried to take a page from the writings of the late William Lynch, the former editor of *Thought*, who spoke of the "prismatic motion" of the Christian imagination. An idea enters reality through the imagination, but then changes shape: "Do anything. Say anything. Let anything happen. Whatever it is, it cannot keep a pure or abstract shape. It moves into a surrounding world...The original word or event becomes splashes of fragmentation and sorrow, diverted from its pure lines and intentions by the rougher lines of the people in between the pure idea and the world." So, too, the idea of "the Catholic." Catholicism will then be understood as prismatic, diffractive of its own light, and Catholic studies will be the study of a spectrum of Catholic phenomena, some of them extending beyond the boundaries of the Roman Catholic church as such.

It is virtually a truism that the so-called "Catholic imagination" is incarnational, but the expression of the Word in the flesh may result in an unruly display of what Newman called the "Idea of Christianity." As Lynch warns: "This is

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the moment most feared by many minds, this very beginning of the drama of the mind. It is the fundamental fear of entrance, of birth, of movement into the world, of 'happening.' For with it begins this diffractive process" ("Theology and the Imagination II: The Evocative Symbol," *Thought* 29/115). Catholic studies programs that take seriously the incarnationalism of Catholic imagination in this way might lead to far more exciting ventures than those that begin with a narrower theological vision. One question people involved with Catholic studies need to ask is whether they will fear or embrace this Spirit-filled movement which lies at the heart of Catholicism itself—a tendency toward diffractiveness that balances out the equal and opposite tendencies of institutional Catholicism toward unification and even centralization of focus.

If we were to adopt this approach to "the Catholic," then we might be able to avoid in Catholic studies what Lynch called the "manichaeanism" of our time, the habit of mind that would create wide gulfs between the sacred and the secular, the spiritual and the religious, the Christian and the non-Christian. Instead, an "analogical imagination" would see different aspects of reality operating within a single image. For example, one could see the impulse of human spirit in the inventive spatiality of the Pazzi Chapel and of the later baroque, but also in the Pantheon (a pagan temple), and, lately, in Frank Gehry's Guggenheim in Bilbao (a secular temple). Or one could find it in the pure forms of chant, but also, building from there, in the polyphony of Palestrina, and beyond him, in the adaptations of Duruflé or Pärt or Leonard Bernstein or even Billie Holiday. Or one could study the political trajectory from Augustine to Aquinas to Machiavelli, and in conjunction with it the theories of Marx, Gramsci, and Zubiri on religion. Or one could engage in a comparative reading of Graham Greene and Gabriel García Márquez on the Catholic struggle between love and lust. The possibilities are virtually unlimited.

Lynch warns against "those Catholics who would reduce Christ or Catholicism to an ideology, or some identification of the Good Tidings with a tribal instinct..." Efforts to limit the horizon of Catholicism (and of students) to a fabled golden age can seriously undercut the historical edge of Christian experience and the sense of irony that should attend it. When we look at the facts of church history, we are forced to step outside ourselves and even to laugh at the magnitude of what we claim whenever we succumb to an absolute of our own creation. For example, an honest reading of Catholic history, including the soaring egos and human failings of Renaissance popes, helps to put into perspective the overblown cults of personality that have come to surround the modern papacy. And a study of Catholic prayers for the blessing of power plants and typewriters might bring a smile even to the most pious face. Catholicism, as Hollywood long ago discovered, is fun and is given to both reverence and laughter. Comedy, Lynch observes, "seems anarchic (and indeed it does have a propensity for thieves, villains, drunkards, fools, idiots, lawbreakers, and other people like the reader and the writer)." Catholicism and comedy go hand in hand.

Yet comedy is the flip side of tragedy, of life's darkness. The Cross forces the Catholic imagination to drive into the real, life as it is, to encounter the sacred, even (or especially?) in the sublime depths of what is dark, painful, or ugly, as novelist Georges Bernanos saw. An acquaintance with the "joyful wisdom" inherent in suffering and in tragedy is the *sine qua non* of the Catholic universe. But this openness to the darkness of reality will require, too, an intellectually honest look at the shadow sides of Catholic history, including the Crusades, the Inquisition, and the history of anti-Semitism. It will also move our gaze beyond the formal classroom into the communities where people live and "do" their religion, and to people often hidden from Catholic parish life: gays and lesbians, prisoners, street people, and society's forgotten.

It is this "mysterious catholicity"—a prismatic, diffractive Catholicism, one which crosses borders and resists mapping—that Catholic studies can help uncover.

A Catholic studies program can open students to an exploration of "the Catholic" that is also by analogy "catholic," through engagement with Catholicism's familiar and classic forms, but also with the unfamiliar and the new. It will involve, of course, an encounter with such Catholic greats as Aquinas and Newman, Greene and Endo, and, more ecumenically, T.S. Eliot or C.S. Lewis; but also a recognition of "the Catholic" in forms not immediately obvious, for example in what Richard Rodriguez has dubbed the "heretical cultural Catholicism" of Warhol or Madonna, and in the ecumenical spirituality of Simone Weil or Denise Levertov. In addition, it will pitch us beyond our North Atlantic axis to the "Catholicisms" of other cultures and the often-unrecognizable forms that Catholicism assumes in them.

It is this "mysterious catholicity"—a prismatic, diffractive Catholicism, one which crosses borders and resists mapping—that Catholic studies can help uncover. This is why it may well be worth our while to continue to pursue Catholic studies at places like Santa Clara, and elsewhere.

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KEEPING THE FAITH ON CAMPUS

Not just how, but who

Melanie M. Morey
Dennis H. Holtschneider

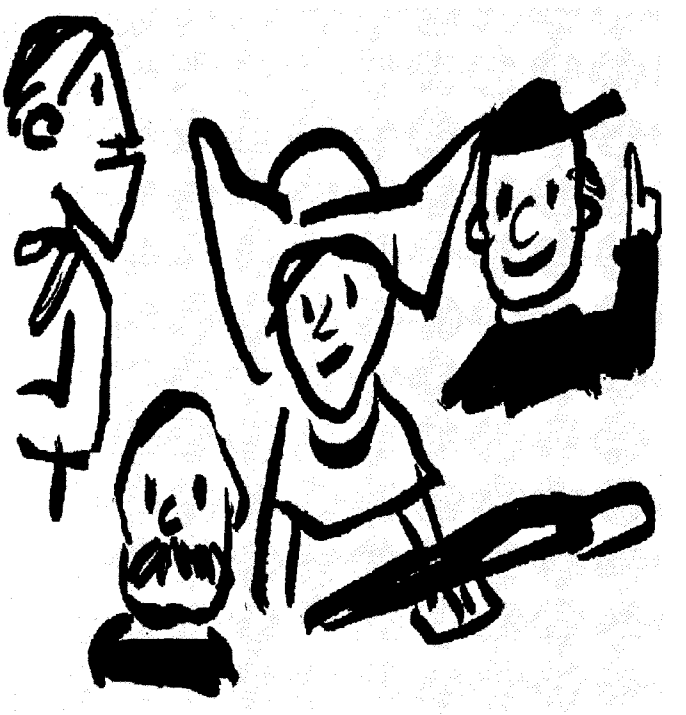
While public attention and debate have focused on *Ex corde ecclesiae*, a major change in Catholic higher education drifts along with little comment. The religious congregations that founded, shaped, staffed, and still sponsor the majority of U.S. Catholic colleges and universities are aging and contracting. As a result, these congregation-sponsored colleges and universities (202 of the 230 Catholic colleges in the United States) are facing serious questions of identity and governance.

In a recent study we conducted about the relationship between religious congregations and colleges, *Relationship Revisited* (Association of Governing Boards, 2000), college presidents and sponsoring congregations identified important trends in governance and sponsorship at their institutions. Ninety-eight percent reported the disappearance of founding congregation members from campuses. The presidents and congregation leaders spoke of the key role religious had once played in instilling and nourishing the particular culture and spirit of their colleges. Both worried that the religious cultures of these institutions are now at risk. These leaders hope that the laity are prepared to fill the role the religious once played in sustaining the unique religious cultures of these institutions. Their hope may be misplaced.

In terms of identity, the future without congregational sponsorship will likely take one of three paths. Some colleges will become secular. A few may find ways to protect the particular spirit of the founding congregation. Most colleges, however, will likely become more universally Catholic. That is, they will shed the particular spirituality and culture that were characteristic of the founding congregation, and will adopt a more broadly based Catholic character.

Private, secular: The possibility of secularization was mentioned by only 4 of the 175 colleges responding to the survey. They saw the possibility as undesirable but real. Most will not choose to take this path. A likely scenario, however, is that a number of colleges will simply drift further and further away from the founding congregation, eventually becoming secular institutions whose only ties to congregation and church are historic and nostalgic.

Catholic, congregational: A number of colleges and universities may retain a strong congregationally specific identity. At such institutions, however, the mere memory of the founding religious will not be sufficient to sustain this identity. The lay professionals who staff the college will need to internalize the spirituality and culture of the founding community. They will also need to become the bearers who nurture, sustain, and pass on the tradition. Therefore, the extent to which the congregation's charism is hospitable to the lay academic life will be an important factor in determining whether or not the transfer of this aspect of institutional culture is successful. Congregational traditions that are more amenable to and consonant with lay experience will have an advantage. (The Franciscan charism, for example, has always been attractive to laity, and many lay organizations steeped in these traditions have developed and flourished over the years.) The final arbiters of whether a particular



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congregation's spirituality is appropriate for laity will be, of course, the laity themselves.

Catholic, noncongregational: Several respondents indicated their colleges are planning to become more universally Catholic, as a response to the aging of the religious congregation.

Many, if not most, congregation-sponsored colleges will follow this path. It is simply unlikely that the broad panoply of Catholic subcultures—Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Basilians, Sisters of the Holy Name of Jesus and Mary, Xaverians, Apostles of the Sacred Heart, Dominican Sisters of Hope, Marianites of the Holy Cross, Salesians, and many others—can continue without the presence of the religious themselves. A generation hence, both the religious and those who knew them will be gone, and the culture will then be based upon second- and third-hand stories. Memory alone cannot sustain a culture.

For some colleges, the process of becoming more "universally Catholic" has already begun. One institution's president described the college's congregational identity. "Our unique characteristics or attributes are the following: (1) warm, personal friendships between priests and religious and lay faculty and staff; (2) exceptional quality of liturgical life on campus; (3) diversity among members of the religious communities working at the college; and (4) the education of the heart as well as the enlightening of the mind." Such characteristics are broadly Catholic. They could as easily apply to a diocesan-founded Catholic college as to a congregation-founded one.

Mergers and strategic partnerships taking hold in higher education will also drive this trend toward broad-based Catholicism. When merging, Catholic colleges with differing congregational heritages either must find common ground or allow one heritage to dominate the other. Colleges that choose to find common ground among different religious heritages will be forced to adopt a more universal Catholic culture and spirituality.

The task ahead for those colleges that wish to sustain a congregational culture, or even a more broadly Catholic one, is enormous. With the exception of the tenured faculty, university education has a high turnover of staff, administrators, and, increasingly, nontenure-track faculty. It is unrealistic for colleges or congregations to rely on these lay professionals to embrace and then advocate a religious culture when their future in the institution is tenuous. Why should lay employees make a life-altering philosophical and religious commitment if the college is not willing to make a commitment to them? Some nontenured faculty may have real connections to the mission, but more often they are institutional transients. The ability to root a self-sustaining congregational culture at colleges and universities may well depend on the colleges' willingness to provide more job security among nontenured faculty and staff.

Tenured faculty are a more stable community, but one cannot presume they are necessarily disposed toward sustaining institutional Catholic culture. In the late 1960s and

Saint

Even the darkness I throw off can heal—

My shadow
slips over dirt
but snags on the lepers
crowding this street; those men
clawing for a piece of that darkness
to keep for themselves.

They want me to pray

but every bone in my hands
is already spoken for;
every church in this town
argues over my heart. Already

someone is selling my breath
in a bottle, my blood
and sweat in two cruets.

Someone's secretly bidding
on the twenty-eight teeth
they'll tear from my mouth.

My tongue will go to Siena,
my arm bones to Venice.

Though terrified of death,
a city will creep
out of its limits to swallow
my grace. Like God,

everyone wants me everywhere at once.

Artists aren't waiting for Rome
to permit me a halo—
Small and illumined,

I'm cornered on a page,
they surround me with Latin.
Their left hands hold knives,
they come mouthing novenas.

And the angels that perch
at the foot of my deathbed
wait their turn

just to tear out my soul.

Catherine Sasanov

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the 1970s, with a core group of congregation members highly visible and involved in campus life, tenure-track faculty were recruited to bring a breadth and depth of diversity to campus life. Thirty years later the same faculty members still represent diverse intellectual and faith perspectives, but the counterbalancing core of religious on campus has all but disappeared. Since they were hired to enhance diversity rather than sustain congregational Catholicity, tenured faculty are less than likely to be key players in establishing a self-sustaining Catholic and congregational culture.

A Catholic culture requires a core group of witnesses at the center of the organization whose palpable belief makes it possible for others to feel free to explore their own religious convictions. If the college desires a Catholic culture, then it must look to create that core group within the organization. Knowledge of Catholicism is not enough. Quiet conviction is not enough. (There are Catholics of strong religious conviction teaching in state colleges, and that does not make those colleges Catholic.) Only a core of visible believers can leaven the culture of an organization.

The spirituality of lay faculty is crucial. Not all faculty at Catholic colleges and universities are Catholic. Those who are usually seek their spiritual nourishment in diocesan-based Catholic parishes, rather than from a particular spiritual subculture. It is hard to imagine that any Catholic college or university could attract and retain a majority of Catholic faculty members who have personally adopted the spirituality of the founders. Consequently, tethering a college to a congregation's particular spirituality may only weaken its chances of maintaining any religious character. If these institutions want a nonsecular future, they must construct serious and sustained formative experiences for their lay faculty, staff, and administrators.

"Stop worrying—the way things are going, there won't be any Catholic colleges to go to."

This task may be complex given two trends our study observed around issues of governance. The first is paralysis: 59 percent of leaders surveyed report that their institution has no plans to address the problems stemming from the disappearance of religious on campus. The fact that 98 percent of leaders identify this disappearance as a problem but fewer than half offer policies or programs to address it is curious indeed. Certainly the waning of religious is not new and the contribution of religious is not an ill-prized legacy. What then is causing this policy paralysis? Some can be attributed to denial, but responses to the study suggest that complex interorganizational ties, commitment to an outdated model, and lack of confidence in the laity are keeping congregations and colleges from moving forward effectively.

Second, governance structures are changing in a way that may make the formation of lay leadership more difficult. Congregations are accepting changes that replace broad influence with narrow control exercised at an ever-greater distance. These new organizational structures are designed for congregational reaction rather than action in board and administrative initiatives (the most common being investing congregations with the power to approve or veto an initiative). Congregation members now have final authority over some specifically defined issues, but little power to initiate, influence, or otherwise actively infuse the campus community with their spirit. And the desire of many congregations for veto power itself reflects a lack of conviction about how well-prepared their lay colleagues are to steward the mission and religious character of the institutions.

For a better understanding of this renegotiation of governance structures, a little history is in order. In the late 1960s, most Catholic colleges became organizations independent from, yet structurally related to the religious congregations that founded them. Separate civil incorporation was sought for the colleges. Bylaws and statutes were written to create structures of shared governance, whereby the religious congregation maintained a percentage membership of the board and reserved some decisions to itself. Most important of all, congregations turned over civil control of colleges to predominantly lay boards of trustees.

The shared-governance model is shifting as congregation membership declines. All told, 25 percent of colleges we surveyed reported that they had changed their governance structures in the last five years; an additional 56 percent said they are currently in the process of changing them, or will be within the next year. In what way are they changing? Seven

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of the colleges we surveyed had shifted from a one-tier board (a majority lay board with roughly 25 percent congregational representation) to a two-tier model in which a lay-staffed board is overseen by a second, all-congregational one, usually composed of the congregation's provincial leadership. This type of change responds to the decline of congregational members, and ensures that congregational input depends less on the views of individual members and more on the congregation's overall provincial values. On the other hand, congregational leaders can be far removed from colleges and have little or no experience in higher education.

A more pervasive and controversial change reflects the congregation's desire to increase its so-called "reserved powers." Reserved powers guarantee authority and control to congregations by reserving certain decisions solely to members of the congregation. At present, 72 percent of Catholic colleges assign reserve powers. Most commonly, congregations reserve decisions on amending governing documents (69 percent), purchase and sale of property (67 percent), dissolution of the corporation (55 percent), mission and identity (53 percent). Provincials favor increasing reserved powers for two purposes: to establish more control over campus life as the direct influence of members decreases; and to make clear that reserved powers belong to the congregation and not to individual congregational members. Presidents, on the other hand, eschew congregational control in favor of congregational influence. As a result they recommend against the expansion of reserved powers.

There are numerous efforts currently underway to impart a college's religious heritage to lay trustees, faculty, and staff. These include orientation for new board members and employees; visits to the site of the congregation's founding and other places associated with its particular charism; endowed professorships in fields related to the congregational mission or identity; convocations, congregational award ceremonies, founders' days, etc. Consortia of colleges with similar charisms have been formed to undertake these initiatives together. Efforts and initiatives such as these are widespread. Whether activities that primarily inform and teach about legacy can on their own form a self-sustaining Catholic culture seems unlikely. Certainly the research indicates that the outcome remains elusive.

If Catholic colleges and universities want their religious culture to continue into the future, they must construct serious and sustained formative experiences for the lay people who will be in charge of them. More important, they must create conditions under which lay people are both willing and able to embrace this process. Any real solution to the problem must operate on the level of building and sustaining a vibrant culture without the direct involvement of religious congregations. As congregations continue to wane, they will be less able to exercise the control structures to which they are now turning. The current effort to renegotiate and revise governance structures is, at best, a stopgap measure, and at worst, a diversion from the real task at hand. □

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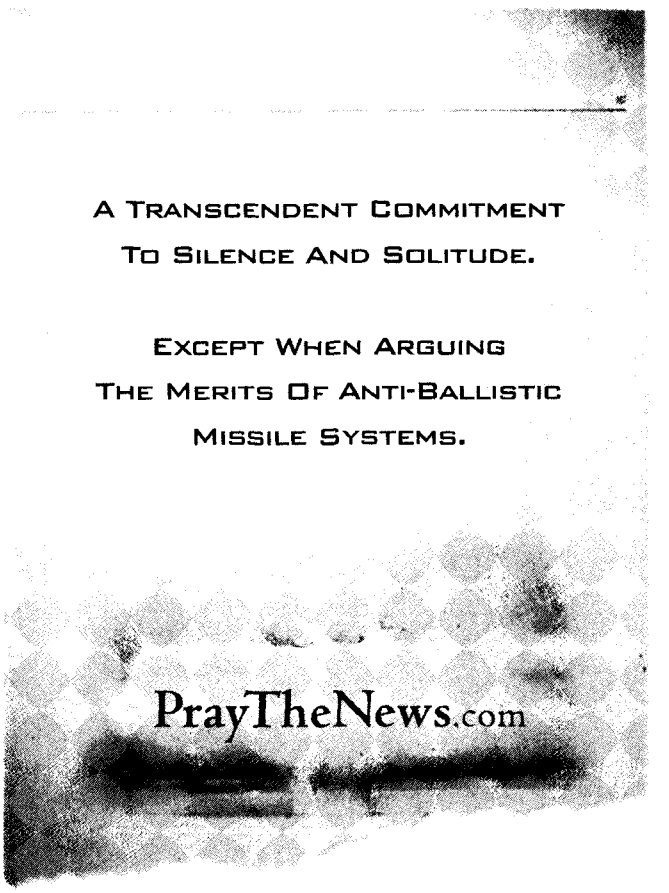

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Rand Richards Cooper

DREADED BLISS

'Heartbreakers' & 'The Brothers'

I recently went to two top-grossing new releases for a dose of marriage, money, and morals, Hollywood style. Maybe we're supposed to be relaxing after the high seriousness of the Oscar season. Or maybe it's just that times are flush, and that means comedy.

Heartbreakers follows the exploits of a mother-daughter scam duo specializing in connubial con jobs. The film opens in a lavish church, with Max (Sigourney Weaver) and Dean (Ray Liotta) exchanging vows amid mountains of flowers and the solemn strains of "Ave Maria." Ray Liotta in church means either (a) mob drama or (b) screwball comedy, and with nary a casket or smirking hit man in sight, we're pretty sure it's (b). At the wedding party afterward, Max tortures her amorous bridegroom by dancing with every man in the room, making him wait and wait. At long last he manages to carry her off to the honeymoon suite, where she pops off her dress to reveal lace underwear, teasing him to a frothing desire—then promptly falls asleep. What's a simple guy from Jersey to do?

Actually, Dean is a kind of scamp himself (he runs an automobile chop shop), but alas, he's facing a pair of crooks more devious, and infinitely smarter, than he is. That sassy young office temp he hired a few weeks ago? Little does he know she's actually Max's daughter, Paige (Jennifer Love Hewitt), and when the very next morning she offers relief for his pent-up need—in *Heartbreakers*, short skirts and low necklines reliably vaporize male scruples—poor Dean barely has himself unzipped when...in walks Max. Outrage and lawyers follow swiftly, and before Dean can say, "I've been had," he's out $300,000 (cash, thank you) and one Mercedes. "How was the wedding, Mom?" Paige asks, as the two power away in the Benz. "Beautiful," says Mom, "like all my weddings." Then it's merrily on to Palm Beach and their next mark, an elderly, bellicose tobacco tycoon (Gene Hackman) who's busily smoking himself to death. Will Max manage to snag him, and Paige seduce him, before he keels over?

Heartbreakers is anything but subtle. Scene after scene showcases Hackman's spasmodic coughing, bilious pallor, and repulsive gray teeth ("I have to kiss that?" Paige complains), while in the background his pet parrot keels over from second-hand smoke. Characterization is achieved mostly by clothing: Hackman, foolish in purple underwear, lime green socks, and garters; Jack, Paige's sweet-souled wannabe boyfriend (Jason Lee), sincere in loose jeans and T-shirt; Weaver, posing as a Russian femme fatale in dominatrix black leather; and, at every turn, the mesmerizing prospect of Hewitt's push-up bra. The movie's soundtrack mixes silky bossa nova with a romping comic theme (by Danny Elfman, whose vaguely demented music graced *Batman*, *Edward Scissorhands*, and the Pee Wee Herman movies). It's all light fluff, and it skips along nicely, a hit-or-miss satire that lands the occasional bull's-eye of weirdness, for instance, when Hackman rhapsodizes, "There's nothing sexier than smoke billowing proudly out of a woman's hot, red, engorged nostrils."

Not likely to reach the green

My chief gripe isn't that *Heartbreakers* isn't serious enough, but that it's too serious. What motivates Max's cynical scamming, it turns out, is concern for Paige—that she'll fall in love, and heartache will follow, as it did for Max years before. Director David Mirkin and his trio of screenwriters don't trust their film's breezy amorality; they want it to have a heart of gold.

In a recent *New Yorker* essay, Anthony Lane wrote that comedy in American movies "has shriveled into a prelude to sincerity: something to be hustled out of the way, almost with embarrassment, to allow warm feelings in." A final twist to *Heartbreakers* preserves some measure of fun, but the ending is mostly about following the truth of your heart and learning to love. Sure, we all know comedy ends with everyone getting married, but do they all have to be healed as well? *Heartbreakers* takes a promisingly nasty falling-out among thieves and turns it into family therapy. All mother and daughter really needed, it seems, was love. That's the biggest con of all.

The Brothers also begins with a wedding, a vision of a glowing bride dressed in white, bearing flowers—and a gun. This recurring nightmare has Jackson Smith (Morris Chestnut), a handsome twenty-nine-year-old physician, waking in a cold sweat. "You think a commit-

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ment to a woman means death?" his shrink asks him. Yup, pretty much. Jackson is one of four basketball-playing, nightclub-hopping L.A. buddies approaching their thirties with mixed feelings about their fast lifestyle. When one of them, Terry, decides to marry—"From this moment on," he announces, "I'm a one-woman man"—the others react with varying attitudes of admiration, nervousness, and scorn. The pledge launches a series of bull sessions in which the four (and, in parallel, their girlfriends) strategize over matters of the heart, or, in the men's parlance, "Love, happiness, and all that shit."

Central to the comedy are black male pride and the geopolitics of dating. "We're single black professional men," says Brian, a lawyer and the group's most incorrigible womanizer, "we're the cream of the crop." Debuting writer-director Gary Hardwick deploys this inflated sense of self as ammunition in the battle of the sexes. "I'm a doctor," Jackson announces to Denise (Gabrielle Union), a thoughtful (and gorgeous) woman he meets at a party. "Why do you say it like that?" she asks him. "Like, 'I'm Zeus, I'm king of the gods.'" She's on to him, and a romance begins.

Hardwick's script awkwardly jumbles heartfelt moments together with raucous low humor. When Jackson's psychologist advises him to open up his spiritual self in his relationships, to try becoming friends with a woman before becoming lovers, he says, "Sorry doc, but my spiritual self needs the booty." Jokes about "hos" and cheap laughs over oral sex yield to startlingly lovely scenes between mothers and their grown sons: like Brian's mother, a woman so bitter about the fathers of her two children, both of whom deserted her, that she can't even hug her son; and Jackson's mother, Louise (Jenifer Lewis), who challenges him, "Is that the kind of existence you want—life without love in it?" For the girlfriends' benefit, Louise offers a cute new twist on the old truth about the way to a man's heart. To find out whether he really loves you, she advises, just wait until you're sitting together late at night on the couch, getting cuddly in front of TV and a late-night snack. "If he will give you his very last piece of food," she says, "then you've got love!" (At this, three women in the row ahead of me burst out laughing: "Is she a sister, or is she a sister!")

The Brothers is aimed at a black audience—I was the only non-African American in the theater—but in fact it has plenty in common with *Heartbreakers*. Both films, despite scads of sexy talk, scantily clad bodies, and anatomical joking, shun actual nudity, preserving an aura of safety, if not sanctity, around the love act itself. Both peddle glitzy images of wealth: *Heartbreakers'* Palm Beach scenes resemble the life insurance commercial in which a dead man's ex-wives compare the respective yachts he's left them, while *The Brothers* depicts a world of swimming pools, tony restaurants, and graduation-gift BMWs, bringing both the assets and anxieties of upper-middle-class life (fear of crime-ridden neighborhoods; the sorrows of divorce) home to African Americans.

Finally, like *Heartbreakers*, *The Brothers* reveals the pervasiveness of therapy, how its values and language ripple through the mainstream of American culture, black as well as white. The girlfriends talk a mixture of therapeutic and feminist boilerplate: "I don't know why women always end up paying for men's emotional failures," Jackson's sister announces. "This is a new millennium, and women are saying goodbye to dependency." Even the guys quote Deepak Chopra, and rib each other with a casual "Man, you got issues, you know that?" And an angst-ridden scene between Jackson and his father includes the following: "I hate it when you do that—rationalize your faults like that. Can't you just be ashamed of your shit for once?"

This brazen mix of idioms could be satire, but it isn't. Like *Heartbreakers*, *The Brothers* leaves characters and audience alike in a distinctly American predicament, somewhere on the near side of comedy. It's hard to know when to laugh and when to cry with so much healing going on. □

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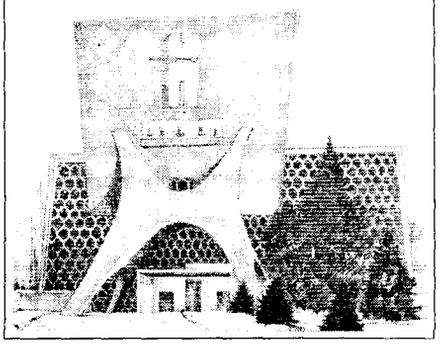

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How to be loyal to Loyola

Jesuit Education 21
Conference on the Proceedings on the Future of Jesuit Higher Education
Edited by Martin R. Tripole, S.J.
Saint Joseph University Press, $70, 544 pp.

Dennis O'Brien

The volume at hand is the record of a conference held at Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia, June 25–29, 1999. Eighty-three authors (mostly Jesuits) delivered talks or made comments on everything from the traditional *ratio studiorum* of Jesuit education to MBA degrees and student life. As a *tour d'horizon* of the voices of Jesuit education in the United States, this volume is fascinating, indispensable, and inconclusive. I hope it is not unkind to the earnest authors who contributed to the 544, 8 ½-by-11-inch pages of this book to say that at the end I am still not certain what Christian/Catholic/Jesuit higher education is or will be. (One assumes that the adjectives are at least compatible if not synonymous.) What Jesuit higher education *was* is clear, but all the authors reject a return to the past. Most assume that there will be fewer Jesuits and fragmented theology. No one wants to go back to "ghetto Catholicism" and theology as *Baltimore Catechism Plus*.

Jesuit universities and colleges have enjoyed unprecedented success in the recent past. The contributors are justifiably proud of the fact that several of these institutions would be regarded as leading players in American higher education. Jesuit colleges are no longer thought of by the public or the higher education establishment as academically deviant, strange isolates of superstition and religious rant. But such academic success is precisely what has made the adjectival qualifier (Catholic/ Jesuit) problematic. To what extent has entry into the mainstream of higher education swamped or submerged (to stick to watery metaphor) the religious sense of these institutions? Faculties are now built competitively with quality appointments from the leading secular graduate institutions, not from the Society of Jesus—where there may be no qualified candidates at all. (Frederick Homann, S.J., points out that while there are currently twenty aging Jesuits with doctorates in mathematics there is not a single Jesuit now enrolled in a doctoral program in that field.) This absence of Jesuit scholars means that laymen will have to carry these institutions in the Ignatian tradition—thus repeated suggestions that an "affirmative action" policy for appointing Catholics and/or inculturation into a school's "mission" for non-Catholic faculty is a necessary strategy for a "Jesuit" future.

What then is the special mission of *Jesuit* education, the mission that will differentiate these worthy institutions from their secular peers? The editor, Martin Tripole, offers in his introduction a theme, which runs through a large number of the offerings. Referring to the Jesuit General Council 32 (December 1974–March 1975)—"the most innovative of the modern Society"—Tripole notes the emergence of social justice as *a* or *the* guiding Jesuit task. But General Council 32 was hardly concluded before Tripole among many others questioned the formula as too restrictive. How, exactly does pursuit of the moral virtue of justice integrate or expand the intellectual virtues pursued in the academy, specifically the traditional Jesuit apostolate in education?

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Even supposing that concern for justice was a differentiating mark of Jesuit education, three immensely difficult questions arise: What, after all, is justice? Can justice be taught? Is justice the special *Christian* virtue? Robert J. Arujo, S.J., expresses the first problem in one of the earliest papers at the conference. "I have examined all the theories and meta-theories [of justice], and while each offers varying degrees of insight, I am still unsatisfied." "Justice" has been a monumental puzzle since Plato's *Republic*, which labors through ten long books to define it—and then it turns out that only philosopher kings could administer a just state. Alfred North Whitehead's famous remark that the history of philosophy is a "series of footnotes to Plato" suggests how elusive and inconclusive the discussion of "justice" has been.

But let us suppose that we knew the nature of justice. Plato's second problem arises: Can virtue be taught? In one sense the answer is obviously "Yes!" Humans do not come prewired for justice or any of the other moral habits. (*Pace* the sociobiologists.) What is not clear, however, is how the *intellectual* work of higher education affects just behavior. One does not become courageous by reading books about courage; one does not become just by reading the *Republic*. Plato had that correct. The testimony of Jesuit alumni contained in the present text suggests that "lessons" about justice took place in the slums and *barrios* of the "real" world beyond the academic quad. Those who take up higher studies must first be just, so that when

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philosophic reason arrives to "justify justice" they will welcome it as an old friend. Maybe the best one can say for university education is that it should not persuade youth that their previous moral indoctrination and experience were a total fraud.

The final issue, however, would seem to be the crucial one. Is "justice" a particularly *Christian* virtue? The prospectuses and programs of most American colleges and universities claim to educate for citizenry. "Princeton in the nation's service" and all that. However well or ill that end is pursued and accomplished, "justice" would not immediately serve as a distinguishing mark for Christian higher education. More important than achieving differentiation from distinguished secular peers is the question whether "justice" is the right designation for what Christianity is all about. On this score, the most crucial paper in the entire volume is that of noted biblical scholar John A. Fitzmyer, S.J., who discusses the complexity of translating Hebrew terms into the Latin *justicia*. To illustrate only one problem: the Hebrew *sedeq*, which often appears as "justice," can also be translated as "charity."

Further Jesuit General Councils recognized the issues raised above. Tripole thinks that General Council 34 is more balanced since it speaks to "the justice of God's kingdom" and "the justice of the Gospel" which display "God's redemptive righteousness and mercy." Surely this is on the right track, but proper formulae do not of themselves solve the problem for Christian higher education. From General Council 32 to General Council 34 one could say that one moves from Jesuit higher education as academics+morality to academics+mystery ("God's redemptive righteousness and mercy"). Fitting "mystery" into the clarified conceptual world of the modern university is, I suggest, *the* problem for Catholic higher education if it is to have any future at all. □

Dennis O'Brien, *president emeritus of the University of Rochester, is the author of* All the Essential Half-Truths about Higher Education *(Chicago).*

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SENSATION & SENSIBILITY

The Body Artist
Don DeLillo
Scribner, $22, 128 pp.

Tom Deignan

Leave it to Don DeLillo to follow up *Underworld* with a slim novella that conceivably could be used as a bookmark for its hefty, much-acclaimed predecessor. *Underworld* famously jumped back and forth from the fifties to the nineties, from Ebbets Field to the Bronx to a nuclear testing site in Kazakhstan. *The Body Artist*, by contrast, is downright claustrophobic, set almost entirely in an aging "old frame house—a place they'd rented unseen—way too big, and there were creaking floorboards and a number of bent utensils dating to god knows."

"They" are Laura Hartke, the titular artist, and Rey Robles, an aging political filmmaker. *The Body Artist* begins ominously—"It happened this final morning"—but quickly turns into a microscopic study of domestic co-habitation. Rey and Laura eat breakfast, pursue their isolated morning routines, all the while talking right past each other in the clipped, occasionally nonsensical style of Edward Albee or Harold Pinter. But this is DeLillo, after all. So even the most isolated characters will inevitably be linked to the vast outside world of plants and animals, chemicals and technology. With the radio droning on, Laura discovers a hair in her mouth, which is "still twisted from the experience of sharing some food handler's unknown life."

"Hey!—Get your hands off her!"

Not until we learn (via an obituary) that "Rey Robles, 64, Cinema's Poet of Lonely Places" has committed suicide, do we get to DeLillo's real focus in *The Body Artist*—death and loss, and how the living perceive and contend with such suffering. Alternately dense and dazzling, DeLillo can be masterful in this short work, distilling the comic and tragic into a single sentence. But in terms of Laura's loss, DeLillo's prose too often seems cerebral, abstract, or needlessly cryptic. Readers are likely to be drawn into *The Body Artist* by the allure of DeLillo's heady themes, rather than the symphonic passages that move his grander novels along.

While mourning in a rather frosty manner, Laura discovers a man living in her home. (DeLillo has by now abandoned any pretense of realism, so it's pointless to ask why Laura "felt no fear.") The mystery man—Laura names him Mr. Tuttle, after an old teacher—"gestured as he spoke, moving his hand to the words," and "the gestures [were] unmistakably Rey's." Is *The Body Artist* a ghost story, with Laura haunted by the memory of her dead husband? That's a start. (Such a resurrection image even suggests a spiritual undercurrent in what does not otherwise seem a particularly religious book.)

But Laura is, first and foremost, an artist—a performer who transforms her body, her language, and her very identity in profound ways. She even keeps a tape recorder handy, to help conjure the wide range of men and women who populate her rage-filled, satirical, ultimately autobiographical one-woman show, fittingly titled "Body Time." Despite all the book's nineteenth-century themes, a twenty-first-century DeLillo emerges in *The Body Artist*. In an age obsessed

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with "reality" and unprecedented technology able to recreate "reality," what of the artist? Laura "spends hours at the computer screen looking at live streaming video feed from the edge of a two-lane road in a city in Finland." She also ponders tape recorders, answering machines, newspapers ("a slick hysteria of picture and ink"), radios, mirrors, and even eyeballs, which process matter "upside down before the mind intervenes."

DeLillo has never been merely the chronicler of postwar, postmodern America that many of his fans (and critics) think him to be, althogh it's not hard to see where he got this reputation. There were the duped masses and paranoia of *White Noise*, the JFK-conspiracy complex of *Libra*, and the first section of *Underworld*, named after a four-hundred-fifty-year-old Pieter Brueghel painting. But in *The Body Artist*, DeLillo is pondering short- and long-term matters—the evolution of human perception, and the artist's ability to reflect reality.

Taken this way, *The Body Artist* can be seen as an intimate, unsettling update of another short work by a master novelist—Henry James's *The Real Thing*. Is Mr. Tuttle Laura's ultimate piece of performance art? An amalgam of memory, imagination, and loss, both personal and universal? "What did it mean, the first time a thinking creature looked deeply into another's eyes? The gaze that demonstrates we are lonely in our souls," DeLillo writes in a decidedly anti-Hallmark moment, as Laura ponders Mr. Tuttle.

Most striking is DeLillo's empathy in his rendering of Laura's struggles. At one point, Laura notes with frustration that her ghostly roommate "violates the limits of the human." But it's left unsaid whether or not this is a good thing. Tuttle is shielded, of course, from death and loss. But he also speaks mere gibberish and feels nothing—good or bad. He could never, as Laura does in the end, "thr[ow] the window open to feel the sea tang on her face and the flow of time in her body, to tell her who she was."

DeLillo, supposed critic of the dehumanized soul, here seems nearly exuberant. Perhaps it is the very knowledge of our limitations, our ability to perceive pain and loss, which most vigorously affirm our humanity. "Take the risk," DeLillo exhorts the reader, not Laura, in a bold narrative moment. "Believe what you see and hear. It's the pulse of every secret intimation you've ever felt around the edges of your life."

The Body Artist is a provocative, and perhaps transitional work for this ever-innovative novelist. DeLillo's vast cultural themes are present. But they seem secondary to Laura's unique predicament, as well as what Rey at one point calls "the terror of another ordinary day." *The Body Artist* finally leaves us with a question Brueghel, Henry James, DeLillo, their admirers, and perhaps even the casts of "Survivor" and "Temptation Island" must ponder now and then: "Is reality too powerful for you?" □

Tom Deignan *has taught American studies, English, and cinema at CUNY and Saint John's University. Currently arts editor for the* Irish Voice *in New York City, he is at work on a novel called* Staten Islanders.

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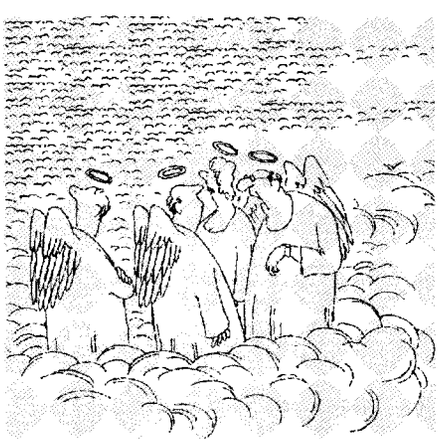
GOD IS GREEN

At Home in the Cosmos
David Toolan
Orbis Books, $25, 257 pp.

James E. Huchingson

David Toolan, S.J., a former book review editor for *Commonweal* and now an associate editor of *America*, has written a rich and suggestive book, one with Olympian reach. *At Home in the Cosmos* brings together a multitude of figures and perspectives taken from physics, ecology, technology, economics, and philosophy and joins them with biblically based theological insights. The aim of the book, he says, "is to 'rethink' and 'refeel' our place within nature and our common destiny with nature as a whole." The emphasis is clearly on rethinking. Each of its five parts is a premise in an extended argument with the conclusion that "The Great Work" of the human species is to enter into a new contract with the earth, pledging to employ our considerable power and knowledge in ways that will restore and even improve upon nature.



"But if they're not back in thirty-five minutes, I think we can take it heaven is flat."

In part 1 Toolan first responds nicely to the "dominion" issue in the book of Genesis initially raised by the historian Lynn White Jr. by examining the Priestly and Yahwist strands of authorship woven into the book. The role of "steward" is emphasized in the Priestly narrative, while the Yawhist author prefers the image of the "servant." Both images are required to smooth out the distortions of White's thesis. Toolan then looks for a positive biblical image for our ongoing relation to an evolving cosmos and finds it in "the root metaphor of the promising journey."

Part 2 is an evaluation of the worldview of modern science, especially as it derives from the genius of both Newton and Darwin. Newtonian science led to the model of the cosmos as a dumb and determined machine governed by physical laws that neutralized the importance of time and therefore of history. Darwin gave us a vision of nature as the arena for a continuing struggle in which the survivors are selected without pity, hence robbing us of the comforting "arcadian" interpretation of nature as a peaceful, pastoral Eden. The ideas of Newton and Darwin (along with those of René Descartes, Francis Bacon, Adam Smith, and a host of others) gave rise to an "imperial ecology" that effectively devalued the world, contributed to the harsh ideology of industrialization, and redefined God as a pale cosmic clockmaker suffering from excessive transcendence.

All this is just half the story. In part 3 Toolan assesses "The State of the Earth," by first asking the question "Is there an environmental crisis?" His answer is "Yes." He continues by addressing the larger questions of the limits of the tolerant global ecosystem for our profligate behavior based on notions of an unlimited resource base, an infinite capacity of the sky and earth to absorb the garbage of a burgeoning world popu-

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lation, and the imperative of endless economic growth.

If modern science provided the philosophical grounding for this unsustainable material growth, do the new sciences of complexity, chaos theory, holistic ecology, and self-organizing systems recommend a different cosmology that is more hospitable to nature? Toolan certainly believes so. In part 4, he argues as much and then weaves theological notions into the suggestions provided by these new sciences. He skillfully combines the sense of divine transcendence in the future as promise (the major theme of the theology of hope) with a vision of the cosmos as fluid rather than fixed, open rather than closed to novel developments. Ours is a universe rife with a playful chaos that allows for freedom and creativity in its creatures.

What does all this add up to? By holding the Bible in one hand and a current account of the "new cosmology" revealed by contemporary science in the other, we acquire a new synoptic vision. This is the theme of part 5. The universe is an open system of great promise, "a great experiment, an adventure story." As "citizens of the earth" we are the central characters in this account. Far from being a determined narrative, the cosmic story unfolds in highly unpredictable ways, but the focus is on us. "It is our responsibility...to say what the purpose of the earth shall be." To "do the earth justice" we must make it beautiful.

This is not triumphant anthropocentrism. Granted, our technological prowess places us in the position of being both stewards and servants. But, as creatures who are a part of it all, we are responsible for making sense of a project in which we have this unique and defining role. It is as if the cosmos spawned us from its cacophony, its gracious "noise," to compose a symphony out of the raw material of the discordant notes.

The goal of improving upon nature is laudable, but it would puzzle many environmentalists. Other than achieving a just and sustainable society, what other improvements are envisioned? Toolan appeals to the elemental openness of the universe and says that its purpose is to give rise to a species (ourselves) whose purpose is to propose its purpose! But the material form of this task, its content, remains vague. Perhaps we can resolve the puzzle this way. Nature, on its own, is beautiful, but nature's human component, acting with arrogant independence, befouls the earth. To improve upon nature we must repair ourselves. Then, surely, the inclusive whole of things, nature plus humankind, will be beautiful.

At Home in the Cosmos is a short book, rich in facts and ideas, and very readable. Its importance, though, lies in its efforts to examine specific and urgent environmental issues in the light of a cosmic, yet deeply Christian, spirituality. It is precisely the sort of constructive interdisciplinary project that is so desperately needed if we are to rescue this priceless treasure of a planet from our own destructive foolishness. □

James E. Huchingson *teaches in the religious studies department at Florida International University.*

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SUMMER 2001

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Christianity in Jewish Terms
Edited by Tikva Frymer-Kensky, David Novak, Peter Ochs, David Fox Sandmel, and Michael A. Signer
Westview Press, $30, 438 pp.

Luke Timothy Johnson

This collection of essays symbolizes a new stage in the long and usually rancorous conversation between Judaism and Christianity. The Jewish editors who seek to inform Jewish readers about Christianity in its post-Shoah posture of repentance and reconciliation here initiate the dialogue. "Taking a careful second look" at those expressions of Christianity that have renounced the path of anti-Semitism and supersessionism, the editors hope to identify which moves of this dangerous dance partner are good for Jews, and to honor Christian thinkers who are willing to dance as equals rather than insist on always taking the lead.

The sense of equal partnership is implicit in the book's title—Jewish scholars are engaging Christianity on their own terms and in their own idiom—and is made explicit in the recognition that Christianity's weakened political presence in the world corresponds to the increased political power of Jews (expressed above all by the state of Israel). This self-confidence is shown primarily, I think, in the willingness to engage Christianity theologically. Before now, "theology" tended to be viewed from the Jewish side as a peculiarly Christian game, and one in which Jews always came out losers. Particularly after the Holocaust, some Jews took the position that tradition was fundamentally fractured, that God-talk was at best a distraction from the only thing that really mattered, namely the survival of the people. But here we find the revival of theology precisely as an aspect of a renewed commitment to tradition. While the shadow of the Shoah is by no means removed, neither do these essays demand the recognition of the Holocaust as (in Emil Fackenheim's term) a historical *novum* that determines all future interpretation. Instead, we find revealed the astonishing (though scarcely unexpected) resilience of the midrashic instinct to clothe even the most radical experiences in the garments of Torah in obedience to the God who both smites and heals beyond our easy knowing. The editors therefore boldly claim and articulate a tradition that itself requires revivification; they see the book as "only the beginning of an effort" encouraging Jews to recover their religious traditions, to "relearn the vocabulary of their own faith" even as they employ that vocabulary to understand the main tenets of their neighbors' faiths.

Where courage is required, danger may be assumed. The other side of the confidence reflected in the volume's title is the concern voiced by both parties that every form of traditional monotheistic religion is under fundamental threat because of the overwhelming power of secularity. A partial subtext of this venture is similar to the one haunting intra-Christian dialogue: If we don't learn to get along, we'll all go under. A petulant version of such worry is found in one editor's fretting over the marginalization of the traditional and theological within American departments of religious studies. The response recommended is the formation of separate academic guilds. The real way forward, in my view, is to enable and encourage new forms of properly synagogal and ecclesial scholarship.

In the introduction to the book, David Novak suggests things to seek and to avoid in a dialogue: positively, each tradition should try to represent the best in the other without distortion, and, negatively, to spurn disputation, proselytization, syncretism, relativism, and triumphalism. All the remaining contributions clearly meet this agenda: an appreciation of values in Christianity is a remarkable constant even in essays that draw firm lines of distinction. From the Christian side, likewise, exchanges are marked by openness and candor, but without the sort of self-loathing that has marked too much of post-Holocaust Christian reflection. The next three essays set a basic historical framework for the remaining essays: Robert Chazan sketches Christian-Jewish interactions over the ages; Irving Greenberg addresses the Shoah and the legacy of anti-Semitism; and Christopher Leighton reviews Christian theology after the Shoah. The pattern of two Jewish authors to one Christian continues a legitimate and welcome dissymmetry in the book. A first Jewish perspective on an issue is followed by a second, with the Christian response directed mainly at the first Jewish perspective.

The essays take on in turn God, Scripture, commandment, worship, suffering, embodiment, redemption, sin and repentance, and the image of God. The contributors are worthy and in some cases

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(such as Stanley Hauerwas) renowned, and the essays are, for the most part, substantial.

Such collections invite each reader to find different things to praise and fault. I found the more specific the subject, the more satisfying the discussion. The consideration of incarnation, embodiedness, image of God, and worship, seemed to enable participants from both sides to find not only common ground but also new perspectives on their respective traditions. I was particularly struck by the openness of the Jewish writers to some positive understanding of incarnation, even while finding the specific Christian claims concerning Jesus difficult. In contrast, some of the more standard dialogue topics, such as redemption, commandment (law), and repentance, tended to reveal gaps in knowledge of the respective traditions. The thorniest of the topics treated is that of God. The essays from both sides approach the subject gingerly, finding comfort in the assurance that Christians and Jews all worship the God of Abraham, but only with great caution engaging the really tough question of the "nature" of this God, given a strong Trinitarian position.

Among other difficult topics that the book does *not* take up is messianism. Some essays touch on it tangentially, with reference to Zionism or incarnation, but there is no formal or sustained treatment. Yet this is surely a concept or ideal that both unites and divides the traditions. Similarly, I found little attention paid, even in passing, to eschatology, whether understood in terms of the classic "four last things" (death, judgment, heaven, hell), or in more apocalyptic terms as the future triumph of God in the world. Likewise, the shared conviction and diverse understandings of resurrection, whether individual or communal, are given too little attention. All these were standard elements in both traditions. Have they disappeared? Should they have disappeared? And since the Jewish side of this conversation so self-consciously adopts the voice of "tradition," one wonders at the remarkably small place given to mysticism. It is not a separate topic, and a reader whose knowledge of Judaism

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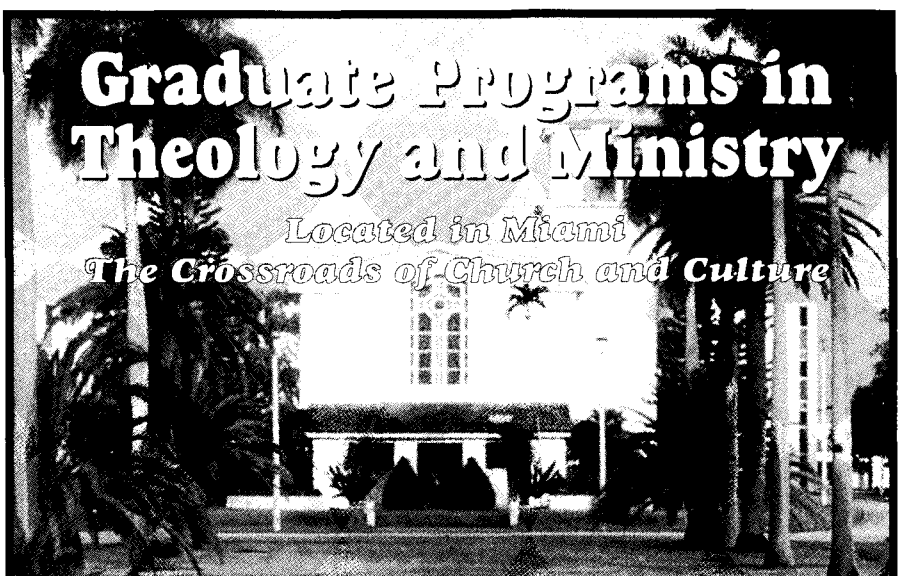
and Christianity derived solely from these essays would have little sense of how important Kabbalism and Hasidism have been, or how engagement with Christian mysticism might legitimize esoteric as well as exoteric understandings of tradition. Indeed, seldom in these essays is the full complexity of "Judaism" and "Christianity" given sufficient recognition. It was fascinating—and surprising—to find a chapter devoted to Philo of Alexandria as an interpreter of Scripture. Still, it was frustrating to find no real argument in defense of that inclusion or discussion of what the consequences of Jewish adoption of that ancient but important diaspora voice might be for an understanding of "Jewish tradition." In the same way, fuller attention to the ways in which Judaism and Christianity are themselves controverted territories would have sharpened the discussion. Occasionally, explicit attention was given to the differences among Orthodox, Reform, and Conservative, as well as the distinctions among Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox. But for the most part, Judaism is represented by Talmud and Midrash, and Christianity by Karl Barth!

Despite the level of sincerity and seriousness, the essays do not as a whole demonstrate impressive knowledge of each other's tradition. Indeed, Michael Signer's "Searching the Scriptures: Jews, Christians, and the Book" has a number of significant factual errors, making George Lindbeck's wholehearted endorsement of it—"There is to my knowledge no better brief sketch of the last two thousand odd years of biblical hermeneutics"—the more discomfiting. And Menachem Kellner's reading of Romans is not careful: "Paul's view of redemption as expressed in Romans seems to be wholly other-worldly, divorced from good works, and focused entirely on truth." At least the Jewish scholars engage Christian texts, however naively. They all show that gameness and willingness to learn expressed so well by the title of Nancy Fuchs-Kreimer's essay, "Redemption: What I Have Learned from Christians." The Christian respondents reveal none of the same curiosity about or engagement with Jewish classic texts.

So the book is not perfect. But it was intended not to be an endpoint, only a beginning. And as such a beginning, it is to be applauded and appreciated. I disagree with David Novak on this point: I think that whereas "relativism" is a bad thing in one's life of faith, it is a necessary element in religious dialogue. To the degree that these scholars, in life deeply committed to their respective versions of the truth about God, are willing in conversation to allow space for another version for the purpose of healing the world, they do us all a service. And they point us forward by showing us how a positive engagement with otherness can yield positive growth for all, as well as peace. As the Letter of James has it, "the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace." □

Luke Timothy Johnson *is the Robert W. Woodruff Professor of New Testament at the Candler School of Theology, Emory University. Among his more recent books is* Living Jesus *(HarperSanFrancisco).*



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(Continued from page 4)

More than style

Congratulations are in order to *Commonweal* for embodying true dialogue (rather than just lamenting the lack of it) when it published "Dueling Versions of Vatican II" by James Hitchcock and John O'Malley, both of whom were forthright yet civil. Both authors are also historians by training, and what struck me about both essays—for all their real differences—was their consistently historical frame of reference.

As someone who plies his trade as a systematic theologian, and does so mostly from the perspective he learned from Hans Urs von Balthasar, I wonder if I might add a Christological point to the debate. According to von Balthasar, Jesus in his lifetime made a claim to "absolute singularity" (not so much, perhaps, in his words as in his behavior and whole demeanor). This claim by its very nature had to represent a provocation, one that led to his death. Only then, and only by means of the Resurrection, could God validate Jesus' identity and affirm him as the one who was what he claimed to be (Acts 2:36; Romans 1:4). For von Balthasar, this same drama continues in the career of the church, for the core theological reality of the church is to be the Body of Christ inside world history.

Therefore, nothing the church can do will ever obviate, in any ultimate sense, the scandal and provocation represented in the person and death of Jesus (1 Corinthians 1:23). For this reason (and therefore not for reasons of left/right ideological tensions in the church today!), I think Hitchcock got the better of the debate, for he was the only one of the two to keep consistently in view the scandal of the church. If I read O'Malley correctly, he seems to think that the more pastoral tone of the documents of Vatican II has somehow removed the main source of the neuralgic tension between gospel and world. But if von Balthasar is correct (not to mention the Gospel of John), that will never happen.

Moreover, O'Malley's essay seems to suffer from internal contradictions. His argument concedes the point often made by art critics about Mannerism or literary critics about the aesthetes of the nineteenth century like Oscar Wilde or Walter Pater: "style over substance," they would complain. But for O'Malley that would seem to be a compliment, not a sign of decadence! And to compound the confusion, he seems to be using the word "style" idiosyncratically. As the Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner said in a recent essay, "The Philosophy-Science Continuum," in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (March 9), "scientific analysis may explain what stylistic features attract or repel our attention in general. It is likely to fail in attempts to account for the individuality of the person, the individuality of the work of art, and, above all, the individuality of each person's experience of a work."

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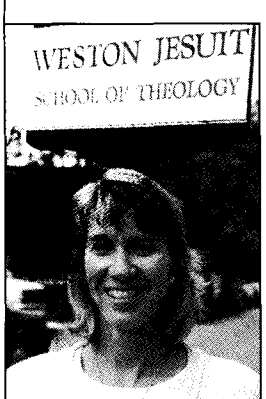

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In other words, O'Malley's thesis is bound to bleach out, and eventually obliterate what is most distinctive about Jesus. And what is most distinctive about Jesus is also what is most provocative, a provocation that is bound to continue in the life of Christ's followers. As a historian, Hitchcock points out how that continued provocation has been verified in church history. As a theologian, I would also insist that Catholics must continue to expect the same scandal-taking in the future as well—the "stylistic" innovations of Vatican II notwithstanding.

EDWARD T. OAKES, S.J.
Denver, Colo.

The author replies:

I appreciate Edward Oakes's criticism, but I think both he and James Hitchcock address different questions from the ones I did. Hitchcock takes "modernity" as his point of reference and correctly points out how anti-Christian and anti-Catholic it was in most of its manifestations. I tried to deal with a different, but no less difficult, subject: what "turn," if any, did the council take, even regarding certain "modern" phenomena. I meant to show that the council took a significant turn, which is not to deny its even deeper continuity with the Catholic tradition. Not to acknowledge this turn is to render the council insignificant. Vatican II's documents—in comparison with almost all other official ecclesiastical documents, especially for the century and a half before the council—are strikingly conciliatory. This does not mean that the council renounced its prophetic mission. I have never interpreted it that way.

Style? My point is that you simply cannot have "style without substance." The two are inextricably intertwined. For that reason, I cannot privilege substance over style. I think that the reality of their inseparability is consistently manifested in the documents of Vatican II. The council, for example, expresses the "substance" of collegiality in the language of reci-

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procity, in language that forgoes threats of punishment for those who disagree with it. Oscar Wilde, by the way, seems to have survived fairly well for the past hundred years for not having any substance.

JOHN W. O'MALLEY, S.J.

Conspiracy theory

Some months ago, C-Span broadcast a meeting between Israeli religious leaders and yeshiva students in Washington, D.C. Midway through the program, one young man asked about Israeli torture of Palestinian prisoners. With ferocity, a rabbi gestured toward the camera and said, "We don't talk outside the family!"

We *Commonweal* Catholics have no such inhibitions, as your reviews of Michael Phayer's and Susan Zuccotti's books by Richard Cohen (March 9) show. But featuring Phayer's book jacket on your cover, with its depiction of a cardinal and Nazi storm trooper equally oppressing a Jew is too harsh even in this *mea culpa* age when the sin of silence more than sixty years ago has taken on the meaning of active participation in the Holocaust.

We condemn Pius XII for his failure to protest while Jews were being gassed in concentration camps, yet we give him a free ride for his silence while more than 5 million Soviet POWs were systematically shot or starved to death by their German captors. Was he silent because they had been warriors defending a hated and feared Communist government? If so, what are we to make of Pius's ignoring publicly the organized massacre of 3 million Poles in work camps or in their villages, a pogrom of Catholics that seems to have been erased from the history books outside of Poland?

I believe Pius XII was aware of the horrors happening in Europe during the war. I also believe the Vatican chose not to denounce those ongoing crimes because it would have been useless and might have destroyed the church itself.

Of course there were Catholic officials who favored the Nazis; one does

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not capture purity or wisdom by putting on the collar (witness the number of American Catholic religious figures who spoke out in favor of the Vietnam War), but the pope was never pro-Nazi.

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JOSEPH D. POLICANO
Luquillo, Puerto Rico

National champion

Just a thank you to William Portier for his tribute ["Queen of Victory, Pray for Us," March 9] to the late Coach Al McGuire.

I have no connection to Marquette and never knew McGuire other than through a television screen when he was coaching, and later as a commentator. But something about him, probably his accent, his speaking style, and what I thought it said about his perspective on life and sports, appealed to me.

Though he has gone on "to the Big Dance" to meet his Queen of Victory face-to-face, I was sorry to hear he had died and I felt an inexplicable disappointment that no one in the TV sports world seemed to have noticed. Now, that seems quite unlikely actually. I can't imagine Digger Phelps, for one, not having a kind word of public farewell to say. Surely, I was just not tuned in when those who coached, played, or did commentary with McGuire spoke about his contributions, his wit and wisdom, and his faith and love for the church. He displayed those latter two loves for all the world to see as proudly as anyone who ever wore a basketball uniform.

Portier's essay made me feel a whole lot better and think that probably a whole lot of people really did notice the coach's passing, and cared!

RITA K. HESSLEY
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Peter Feuerherd

Father S. was a perpetually disgruntled pastor in the middle-American city I lived in some twenty years ago. He was in charge of Saint Joan's Church, located in a neighborhood perceived as being on the edge of decay. A veteran priest, he had been made pastor a few years before and had inherited a losing brand. Saint Tom's, the neighboring parish, had established itself as a hip Catholic alternative, known far and wide for its clown liturgies (yes, such things actually did exist), balloons, and strumming music from the Saint Louis Jesuits.

"This is not Catholicism," Father S. would proclaim to anyone who would listen. He wasn't making a liturgical point, however. He was making an issue about parish organization.

"This is Congregationalism. Catholics should attend the parish where they live." And then, over lunch at a Chinese restaurant, he would offer a long-winded explanation of the beauties of parish boundaries, lines drawn to indicate where the people of God should find their spiritual sustenance together. That's how Catholics were supposed to do things, he would say; only Protestants shopped around for the perfect church aligned to their personal worship styles.

Father S. said he could sure use the energy of those parishioners who had abandoned Saint Joan's for the hip happenings next door. He needed them to help revive the neighborhood. He had lost the best and the brightest, he complained.

At the time, I chalked up Father S.'s complaints as the grumbling of a man who—perhaps the worst sin in American capitalism—could not compete with a neighboring franchise. So what if Saint Joan's were to struggle, and perhaps even fold? He needed to try something else to grab market share. Why couldn't he understand that? Why couldn't he appreciate the inclination of those who were attracted to Saint Tom's? Even though they lived inside his parish's geographic boundaries, they needed to go "where I can be fed," a phrase heard often from Catholic parish shoppers.

Two decades later, I have now come to appreciate Father S.'s view more fully. I'm not sure whether I'm ready to bring out the parish-boundary militia to enforce the obscure canon laws cited by Father S. concerning the integrity of officially recognized territorial parishes. But in failing to heed the Midwestern priest's warning, American Catholic life has become increasingly balkanized, even at Mass—the ritual that should bring us together.

One striking aspect about the case of Robert Philip Hanssen, the FBI agent accused of spying for the Russians, is that he is a Catholic. Not a forty-five-minute Sunday Catholic, but a serious one and a member of Opus Dei. This aspect of Hanssen's life was described in detail in a recent *New York Times* (February 25) article. The *Times* says the parish in the Virginia suburbs that Hanssen belongs to is well-known in the D.C. area for its traditional Latin Mass, and that it is a magnet for prominent like-minded Catholics. What struck me is that Hanssen's church shares much of what Saint Tom's offered. Both developed unique market niches, bringing in Catholics from all over to a kind of liturgy with which they were comfortable.

What a contrast to the Ash Wednesday Mass I attended at Saint Paul's on the West Side of Manhattan. There the church was not only filled, there were homeless people in from the cold, men in janitorial service uniforms who work in the nearby office towers, and management types in suits. They represented seemingly all the races and ethnicities the West Side of Manhattan can offer on a weekday afternoon. I had no idea whether anyone read the *Wanderer, Crisis, National Catholic Reporter,* or *Commonweal*. How many had voted for Al Gore or for George W. Bush was a complete unknown. But I knew they were Catholics ready to embark with various degrees of seriousness on their Lenten journeys. It was the kind of scene that inspired Thomas Merton and Dorothy Day, two converts who found in the Catholic parish a place where the people—often championed in vague platitudes by Merton's and Day's trendy leftist friends—actually lived.

A Brazilian Presbyterian theologian once told me what he admired about Catholicism: "You can hold to all sorts of different beliefs, and still come together around the Eucharist. When Protestants have a disagreement, we form another denomination."

But we may be losing that sense of the church. Jesuit Father Walter J. Burghardt notes in *Long Have I Loved You: A Theologian Reflects on His Church* (Orbis), that "some Catholics refuse to worship with other Catholics save on their own narrow terms." Burghardt is right. And the more one looks, one discovers that increasingly Catholics in pluralistic America are as divided around the Mass as they are in other accidentals of politics, class, ethnicity, etc.

These days I recall Father S. with a certain fondness. I don't know where he is, but I realize now that he wasn't just a jealous grumpy old pastor. He was a prophetic priest making a point. We should take his message more seriously, lest we continue to reap the whirlwind of a church increasingly divided around its sacred table. □

Peter Feuerherd *is a frequent* Commonweal *contributor.*

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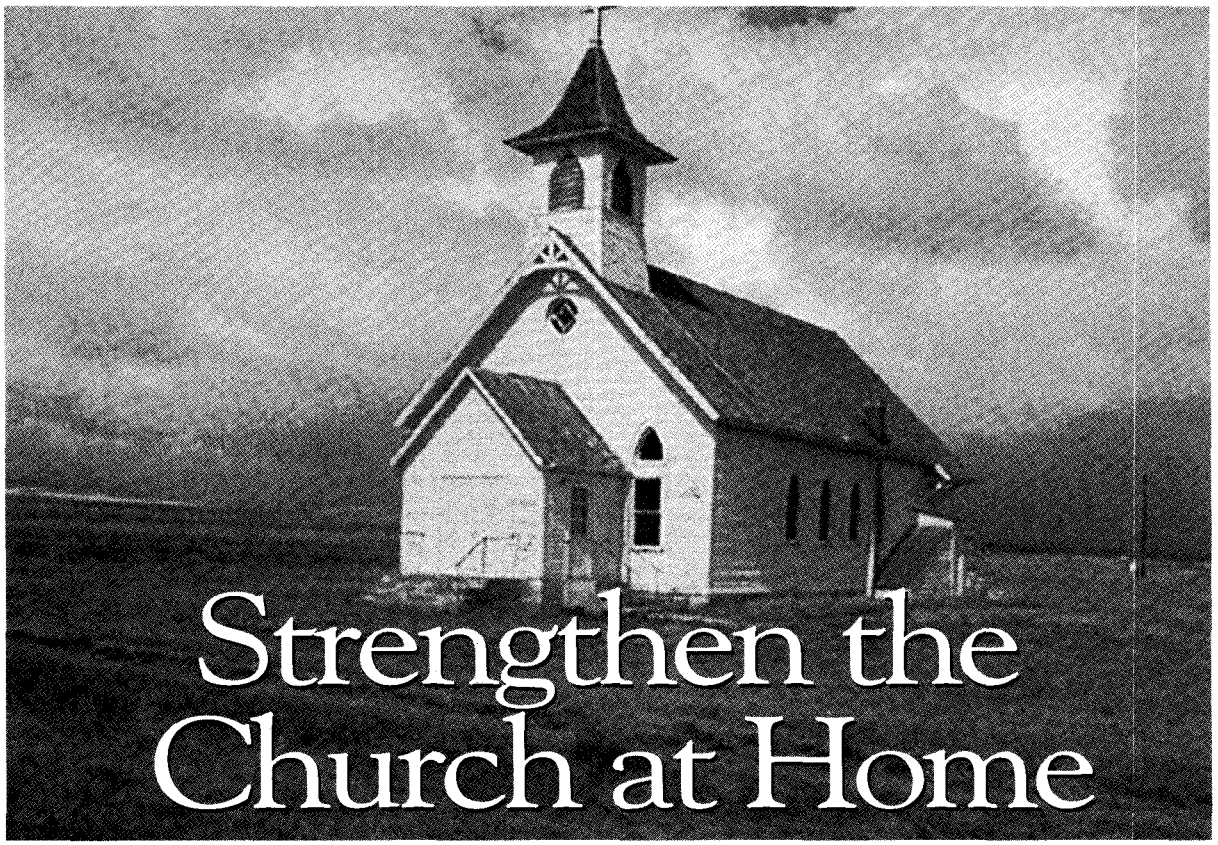

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- ***Diocese of Brownsville***—there are more than 700,000 Catholics, many of whom don't speak English. At the present growth rate, by the year 2000, there will be one priest for every 12,000 Catholics.
- ***Diocese of Lexington***—serves 50 counties, 39 of which are in Appalachia, one of the country's most economically depressed regions.
- ***Diocese of Pago Pago, American Samoa***—consists of 9 parishes, the largest of which has 1,000 families living in 5 villages.

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